

Global Team Success

A master class for senior managers & executives

Global teams must achieve results in the midst of cultural differences which can jeopardise success. Different, culturally-based, expectations and assumptions about roles, relationships, priorities and performance can become traps for the unwary. Good intentions alone are insufficient to overcome such obstacles. All too often, the productivity of global teams is undermined by misunderstanding, loss of trust and poorly aligned effort. This demotivating experience can then trigger negative judgements of each other's character and ability.

UGM research over the last ten years has identified a cluster of success factors that characterise high performing global teams. From our filmed data, we have distilled Six Steps to Success that help global teams to build the insight and skills they need, if they are to mitigate the risks and realise the benefits of their cultural diversity.

MODULE 1 (half a day)

STEP 1: Align Goals

Global teams possess a significant asset: diversity in thinking styles supports innovative problem solving. But misaligned effort often negates this advantage. Thinking differently is good but wanting different things is not!

- Identifying drivers of value and matching these to project goals
- Linking project and organisational goals
- A practical tool for making sure all team members are strategically aligned

STEP 2: Manage Performance

Team performance needs to be managed in ways that support success. Culturally different ideas about teamwork, performance and motivation can threaten effective collaboration. In addition, different ways of communicating and behaving can introduce complexity.

- Building a shared approach to managing team performance
- Diagnosing a team's weak spots and taking effective action
- Practical team management tools that work across cultures

STEP 3: Build trust

Research shows that a lack of trust can contribute to failure in global teams. Strong trust has positive outcomes. But cultures don't always prioritise the same trust components.

- Analysing the team's scores on the UGM Trust Inventory
- Exploring trust behaviours and identifying the team's trust preferences
- Designing a trust 'contract' that will support cohesion and rapport

MODULE 2 (half a day)

STEP 4: Create virtual tools

A critical step for a global team involves creating a virtual toolkit that supports collaboration across the once fixed boundaries of time, distance and culture. Face-to-face styles of working don't always deliver the best results in virtual settings.

- Developing shared protocols for regular activities
- Assessing the suitability of various virtual tools for different kinds of tasks
- Skills to support telephone and video conferencing across cultures

STEP 5: Influence stakeholders

Influence concerns getting others to do something that they might not otherwise do without our guidance. This is a vital skill for global teams since lines of formal authority and power are often diffused.

- Who are your stakeholders and what do you want to achieve?
- Understanding the world of others, including their constraints and challenges
- Developing a culturally-insightful influence strategy based on mutual benefit

STEP 6: Resolve conflict

It is not realistic to imagine that global teams will always be harmonious. Exploration of diverse perspectives is vital, but requires culturally astute conflict resolution skills.

- Two common types of disagreement in global teams
- Sources of misunderstanding and the role of culturally-based conflict 'scripts'
- Toolkit for effectively managing disagreement, with suggestions for East and West