



danibu update

Summer 2017 | update #07

Keep calm and travel!

Welcome to this danibu update #07, a cross-culture and *wanderlust* issue, which will probably reach you somewhere in your well-deserved Summer break.

Vacation matters! Being self-employed, juggling between interim jobs, consulting assignments and bootcamps, means, I really treasure the ability of recharging batteries and refueling productivity every now and then. Just like now: Hiking in the Belgian Ardennes and Mallorca later on. In this spirit: Have great brain break, switch off from work and see you back again soon - positively bursting with energy!



When in Rome ...



... do as the Romans do. You've most probably heard this saying before. But did you know it actually doesn't mean Rome as a particular country, but rather appeals to people's intercultural sensitivity in general? When visiting another country, behave like locals would. In other words: Be aware of the SRC.

SRC

The Self-Reference-Criterion refers to our (unconscious) belief that our own cultural values, habits and generally "the way we do things around here" are the only correct way. Because that's what we learned; that's what we're used

to.

The picture above shows a simple example: There's more than one way to view a world map. How surprised I was after 40 years of seeing "normal" world maps to come across an upside down one in a bookstore in Australia a couple of years ago. The most surprising thing was that I found it surprising. It's quite artificial to have North at the top of a map and also, that - here in Europe -, we are used to seeing a Eurocentric version only. Europe - the hub of the universe? Well, Australians, for example, think similar, considering the 'Aussie way' to be best of all and wondering why the rest of the world calls it "Down Under"?



It's hard to believe that I'd been educated into one stereotypical map, so I started to rethink the world. International sojourns – both for business and leisure – bring us closer to other cultures and broaden our minds. Healthy SRC awareness makes or breaks successful relationships.

If you want to learn more about [intercultural do's and don'ts](#), gestures and etiquette, saying "No", presenting, decision-taking, conflict resolving or negotiating, join the [danibu communication bootcamp on 15 November 2017](#) (August session already full).

Are you lonely? Have a meeting!



All of us global minds are painfully familiar with the minefield of intercultural **business meetings**. Sometimes, they're successful, and sometimes, they aren't. Which of these 4 stereotypical meeting cultures would you chose?

Anglo-Saxon Meeting

The main purpose is to close the meeting with a list of to-dos, for everyone to know their responsibility, what to do next, what target to hit and by when

Latin Meeting

Typical for so-called high context countries (e. g. Russia, Chile, Thailand or France), where the boss chairs the meeting, and the outcome is to announce what the boss has decided

German Meeting

A group of experts gets together for the single purpose to improve a process, product or service during a short and efficient meeting

Dutch/Scandinavian Meeting

Everybody can kick-off the meeting (from manager to secretary). Everyone can attend it (the more, the merrier), so you might end up attending several similar meetings wondering what you're doing there. The agenda is just a piece of paper, and who says you have to stick by it. The ideal meeting outcome: Fix the next meeting!

The most famous cross-cultural communication blunders



If you're in **international marketing**, it's good to **cross-culturally check** your brand names and slogans before launch. Here a selection of the most famous cross-cultural blunders. They seem comical, but have actually turned into serious costly errors:

Microsoft

Their global internet search engine "Bing" in Mandarin Chinese sounds like "illness", or means "pancake", in certain Chinese dialects. Microsoft had to rename it to "Biying" in China, positively alluding to the Chinese proverb "you qui bi ying" ("seek and ye shall find")

Electrolux

The Swedish vacuum-cleaner manufacturer used the following for their American ad campaign: "Nothing sucks like an Electrolux"

Pepsi

In Taiwan, the translation of the soft drinks maker's ad slogan "Come alive with the Pepsi Generation" came out as: "Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead"

IKEA

Their plant pot "Jatterbra" is a crude sexual word in Thailand. As Thais can be quite conservative, IKEA has been forced to hire a team of local linguists into their marketing team there

Ford

Puzzled by the fact that sales of their "Pinto"-model (a success elsewhere) totally flopped in Brazil, Ford realized that Pinto was Brazilian slang for 'tiny male genitals'. A costly linguistic mistake, which caused Ford to take all nameplates off and substitute them by "Corcel" (horse)

Castlemaine

The Australian brewer launched its XXXX ('four-ex') beer in the USA using their trademarked jingle "I can feel a four-ex coming on" - which had proved successful in the Australian market. Unfortunately, the company was unaware

that XXXX was the brand name of a successful American condom manufacturer!

Parker

The American luxury pen company took their advertisement across the border to Mexico, using their slogan: "It won't leak in your pocket and embarrass you". However, they mistakenly used the Spanish word 'embarazar' for 'embarrass' and so actually advertised: "It won't leak in your pocket and make you pregnant"

10 tips for being hated everywhere you go



Craving a little 'me time' while travelling? Sick of mass tourism and desperate for solitude? Here the best tips to score instant isolation while travelling - by making everyone utterly hate you:

1. Forget you have a giant backpack on your back and make lots of sudden movements.
2. Travel in giant packs of 20 of your closest friends and be sure to speak to each other by shouting loudly across open spaces and airplane terminals
3. Assume what's culturally kosher back home is kosher everywhere else on the planet. No matter where you go or how people glare, just keep doing you
4. Walk around temples and holy sites in various states of undress. Bikini tops for women and board shorts for men are preferable
5. Speak to non-native English speakers exactly as you would with native speakers. Get frustrated when they don't understand what you're saying – then start to speak slowly and loudly. Don't change the actual words you're using - say the exact same thing, but shout it. Your louder volume and slower pace will help people instantly learn English
6. While shopping for souvenirs, bargain for an hour to protect yourself from being "scammed" by the poverty-stricken shop owner who spent eight

hours painting that lantern by hand. Glare when she won't budge on the price, which already amounts to about fifty cents

7. Assume that those pesky airline rules about overhead compartments and upright seat positions apply to everyone but you. Then check these 2 fun [creative in-flight safety videos](#)
8. Snore on the plane or eat smelly street food
9. Take selfies with your arms around priceless ancient statues. Don't forget the peace sign and make sure to use that selfie stick with blatant disregard for those around you
10. Think of your travel destination as your home-away-from home, but without the boring responsibilities of work and 'real life.' Forget the fact that the locals who live in the place you're visiting are not on vacation, but are getting up early, going to work, practicing their religion, and enduring annoying tourists day in and day out

If you actually like to befriend your fellow travellers or even locals, [do the opposite](#) of everything I've just listed and refer to above SRC-article of this danibu update.

How German sounds



Communicating with people from other places isn't just about language – but the tone and pitch of your voice and a friendly-sounding language can help a great deal to make that important first impression successful. At the [danibu presentation bootcamps](#), a fun, cross-cultural warm-up is to say "hello" and introduce yourself in as many different languages as possible (just like actress' [Amy Walker's](#) famous example of 21 languages).

"Dani, you sound much harsher in your own native language (German) than when you present to us in English", is what I, funny enough, always hear from

participants. Looking at this [video](#), I can see what they mean.

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