

Book Review

by Lothar Katz

Nancy J. Adler

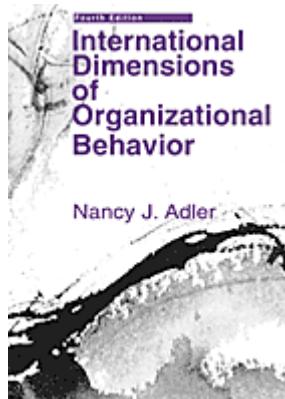
INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

Nancy J. Adler is a professor of International Management in the Faculty of Management of McGill University in Montreal, Canada.

International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior is the result of her extensive studies in various fields of intercultural research, from international organizational development to expatriation. Targeting an American audience, the book's goal is to enable U.S. managers to see the (business) world from a global perspective. While this may seem basic to interculturalists, Adler rightfully points out that until recently, much of the published material on management implicitly assumed that Americans' work behaviors are universal.

Part I, "The Impact of Culture on Organizations", makes a compelling point that work behaviors indeed vary across cultures. It also dispels the myth that organizational culture can moderate or even erase the influence of national culture, a belief often found within large global corporations. To the contrary, researchers have found that organizational culture magnifies national cultures, making the latter's impact on work behaviors more pronounced.

In part II, "Leveraging Cultural Diversity", Adler addresses various effective organizational be-



haviors in an intercultural environment. She proposes an approach for culturally synergistic problem solving, describes the potentially positive or negative impact on team performance of multicultural diversity, discusses global leadership, motivation, and decision making, and reviews strategies and tactics for global negotiations. Kept in a less academic style than the first part, these chapters provide a useful framework for international business organizations, enabling leaders to recognize opportunities and problems and to translate the suggested approaches into corporate processes and procedures.

For the last part of her book, "Managing Global Managers", Adler might have been better off had she made it into a separate volume. As it is, this part seems loosely connected with the core concepts, discussing such aspects as effective ex- and repatriation, the impact of global life on expatriate spouses, and so on. The most valuable chapter might have been the one on global careers. Following a too-shallow discussion of required leadership qualities, it looks at findings from a survey of international MBA students candidates' and debates the prospects of women as global leaders. Alas, most of these topics aren't covered extensively enough and leave the reader wishing for more substance.

Overall, *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior* gives a global perspective on many leadership tasks and challenges. It is valuable reading for anyone doing international OD work.

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Lothar Katz is the founder of Leadership Crossroads. He has a wealth of experience in achieving productive cooperation across cultures and driving business success on a global scale.

A seasoned former executive of a Fortune 500 company, he regularly interacted with employees, customers, outsourcing partners, and third parties in more than 25 countries around the world. These included many parts of Asia, e.g., China, India, and Japan. Originally from Germany, he has lived and worked both in the United States and in Europe.

