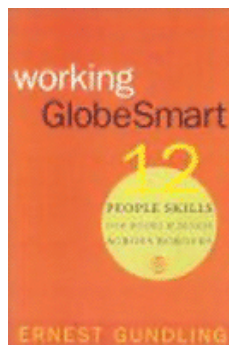


As a co-founder of Meridian Resources Associates, Ernest Gundling might have been tempted to write this book primarily as a showcase for *GlobeSmart*[®], their (useful) web-based consulting product. In presenting a global people skills model designed to guide corporate leaders in becoming what he calls “global citizens”, he attempts to do much more than that. Sadly, he fails at least in part.

Working GlobeSmart presents a global model that is based on a bundle of interpersonal, group, and organizational people skills. After a brief introduction and a section linking global people skills to aspects of culture, Gundling presents a list of twelve required skills, from Establishing Credibility to Building Global Teamwork to Managing Change. For each of them, he then goes on to discuss how to be effective in cultures that are different from the U.S. Listing case studies and giving examples for both effective and flawed approaches, Gundling often makes a strong case for why developing these skills matters. Admirably, he also sprinkles in sections he labels “My Mistakes”, sharing some of his own less-than-ideal experiences and the lessons learned from them. Most of the case studies and examples deal with one specific culture, and they are often quite insightful. I particularly liked the



Training and Development chapter, which has some great recommendations. Less compelling are the case study and examples used in the chapter on Negotiation, which all focus on China and are often too specific and sometimes relate more to the fact that China is the last major communist bastion rather than truly giving cultural insight.

Where the book really falls short is in not mapping the guidance it gives to the countries and cultures where it might apply. Gundling frequently refers to a set of cultural orientations (individual/group, task/relationship, and so on), that is defined nowhere in the book but is pivotal to understanding some of its concepts. Worse, he fails to fill in the reader on where different cultures fall in the spectrum of each orientation. Consequently, only cultural experts who are well versed in placing a given country within each spectrum of orientations will be able to determine the appropriate application of each skill.

If you are a business leader looking for ready-to-use advice for international interactions, you will still pick up useful hints about doing business in countries like Germany, Russia, China, Japan, and others. However, you may want to look elsewhere for a comprehensive how-to guide on doing business in any of them. While *GlobeSmart*'s web page (you'll have to sign up and pay for using it) closes some of that gap, it does not clearly spell out each country's cultural orientation either, still presenting the same dilemma.

* On the web at www.globesmart.com.

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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.

