

# Foreign Language Competence and International Business: A Cultural Approach

Dr Jonathan, S. Swift

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### Foreign Language Competence and International Business: A Cultural Approach

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Foreign Language Competence and International Business: A Cultural Approach Dr Jonathan, S. Swift The past three or four decades have seen a steep rise in the number of cross-border operations taking place throughout the world, as measured in terms of trade flows (imports-exports), FDI (foreign direct investment), or joint venture initiatives. The scope and depth of today's international business operations would suggest that cross-border contacts are inevitable for all but a small minority of companies. If we accept this premise, then it surely follows that those companies that wish to operate competitively should be prepared to adapt their operations accordingly.

Communication (or more precisely language) is a key factor in developing trust, commitment, cultural affinity, experience, and satisfaction. Thus it is communication (language) that provides the thread that runs through the whole process of relationship development. This is why 'foreign language competence' (FLC) is a major component of successful cross – cultural relationship development, and why companies seeking to develop international relationships should ensure that they have access to skilful cross-cultural communicators.

This title deals extensively with the necessity for FLC in international business, ways of understanding foreign culture, and of how to best implement strategies to overcome these intitial barriers.



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