

A case for global leadership: the Kai Bendix story

Setting the right direction as a leader and then motivating and aligning people along the way is a tough challenge for any leader. Achieving this in unfamiliar cultural contexts within a global operating environment creates an extra layer of complexity. Yet the ability to integrate global strategy with local perspectives is increasingly the responsibility of individual leaders undergoing international careers on behalf of their organisations.

This video programme looks at how to address leadership challenges that arise when expatriated in an unfamiliar cultural context, and leading a project team consisting of local nationals. What makes this case different is that it is driven by a documentary drama that tells a real story through the mouths of real people. It is the story of Kai Bendix, General Manager of Nivea Beiersdorf in India, who faces three challenges to his leadership, six months after the set-up of the company in Mumbai. He needs to reflect back on his previous leadership experience in Bulgaria, and compare the present realities of India, before deciding how to respond. Local perspectives, impacting on his response, are directly expressed by key members of his management team in each location.

This video learning tool will support you in:

- 1) recognizing the challenge of leading people in an unfamiliar cultural context, and the qualities required to be successful
- 2) reflecting on the degree to which you can transfer leadership experience from one environment to another
- 3) responding to three specific leadership challenges faced by a German leader working in India
- 4) understanding how this leader actually responded, and the links to influencing and authenticity

The film itself is shot both in India and Bulgaria, and is divided into sections that enable the learner to first understand the complexity of the leadership choices Kai faces, before learning what actions he takes and the consequences of those actions.

Learning Objectives:

1. Introduction

Reflect on leaderships skills and cultural factors that impact on global leadership challenges

2. Drawing on the past

To reflect on a previous international experience as a source of inspiration for managing present realities.

3. The World As You Find It

To see how leadership issues look from a number of different personal and cultural perspectives, and what may factors may need to inform the decisions Kai makes

4. The World As it Finds You

Reflect on the personal side of leadership - what makes leaders unique as individuals, authentic in style, and influential for others.

5. Taking Action

Reflect not only what Kai did, but also how he did it to create 'influential moments', and then to return to the issue of authenticity.

6. Results

Reflect on extra learning about global leadership