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ARTICLES

Singaporean and US Evaluations of Business Writing: Consistency and National Perspectives Matter

COLIN M. CLARK AND PRISCILLA S. ROGERS

As businesses look for employees who can communicate effectively across cultures, there is an increased interest in assessing communication for the global workplace. This study compared how Singaporean and US evaluators applied four analytical tools to assess the responses of Singaporean soon-to-be new hires to workplace scenarios that involved written critiques of a superior's work. The tools covered the writer's ability to fulfill the task, as well as the coherence, reasoning, and lack of errors in the written sample. The results suggest that while these tools can be meaningfully applied across countries, US evaluators award significantly higher scores on task fulfillment and reasoning than do their Singaporean counterparts. Subsequent analyses suggest that these differences stem from content preferences we characterize as national perspectives: US evaluators favored an external "proactive" focus based on potential gains; Singaporean evaluators preferred an internal reactive focus based on avoidance of potential losses. This finding has implications for cross-national assessment and education related to hiring and workplace assessment.

Horizontal or Vertical: A Perspective on Korean Collectives

INJU YANG

In vertical collectives, respect for hierarchy represents the concern for a certain subset of people, whereas in horizontal collectives there is a concern for the general collective membership. How do Korean organizations find the optimal equilibrium between these two views of collectives? In this conceptual paper, the unique features of the Korean collective are examined to explain the dynamic between hierarchical authority and group harmony in organizations. The author concludes that group leadership is the norm in Korean organizations, that is, responsibility for conflict resolution is not just the individual responsibility of the leader.

Buyer-Supplier Networks: An Exploratory Study of Taiwanese Fastener Firms in China

MARK GOH AND WEN-SHINN LOW

This paper investigates the business dynamics and practices of buyer-supplier networks of Taiwanese firms in the fastener industry. Five major stages associated with the evolution of the networks are identified: locating, selecting, establishing, maintaining, and transferring. Exploratory interviews with five Taiwanese firms based in China were

conducted to probe the relational issues and business practices at each stage. Preliminary results suggest that the establishment and maintenance of long-term relationships with local Chinese suppliers is difficult due to the lackluster commitment of the local Chinese suppliers to invest in long-term, ongoing business relationships, and the emphasis on short-term gains. Notwithstanding the close cultural and geographic distances as well as language similarities, Taiwanese firms in the fastener industry still find it difficult to engage in strategic procurement within China.

RESEARCH REPORT

The Development of the Stock Market in Vietnam: An Institutional Perspective

AI ANDO AND WILLIAM J. SCHEELA

In this paper we examine the establishment and development of a stock market in Vietnam by focusing on the first two years of stock market operations (2000–2002). We use Institutional Theory and Agency Theory as our theoretical framework in order to analyze the development of the stock market and to identify unique characteristics and challenges relevant to this process. We found that the stock market has developed very slowly because of the lack of fully developed financial and legal institutions that are required to support a stock market. Investors, both domestic and foreign, have been hesitant to fully support a stock market because of the lack of both transparency (which can lead to agency problems) and investment incentives. Recommendations are developed to improve the stock market's development process.