



Dr. Karin Schreiner. Photo: © Felicitas Matern



Dr. Karin Schreiner's book.

AUSTRIA'S CONSULTING EXPERT

A bridge between cultures

Dr. Karin Schreiner is an author and consultant for intercultural competence. Based in Vienna, Schreiner shows how to work successfully within an international context.

TEXT: MARILENA STRACKE

Today, most companies maintain relations abroad. Although the world is getting smaller, cultural differences can still be a challenge when it comes to negotiating deals or establishing work-flows. A diverse playground is beautiful, but in order to benefit it is vital to understand different cultural values, attitudes and expectations.

Dr. Karin Schreiner, an expat in Asian and European countries for many years, knows first-hand that mentalities are different across the globe. As a cross-cultural facilitator, she has witnessed many business challenges that could have been mastered better if cultural differences had been addressed.

"Our day-to-day work is a constant setting for intercultural encounters because cultural diversity is part of our society,"

Dr. Schreiner explains. "Managers lead by example and are responsible for showing how openness and respect can be embedded in business."

Whether you do business in Austria where Dr. Schreiner is based, or if you are looking to expand from Europe, it is the same principle. You need to understand the culture that is new to you.

Dr. Schreiner says: "One of the biggest problems I address is that managers often don't know how to communicate effectively within a different cultural context. Interacting with employees the right way can make everything a lot easier. If, for example, I start to work in India and my professional demeanor is not overly confident in terms of demonstrating leadership, I've immediately lost. But if I appear authoritarian

in European countries such as the UK or Austria, it will not be well received at all."

It can be a fine line and hence it is important to consult with experts like Dr. Schreiner who can navigate through intercultural differences. Schreiner covers India, China, France, Belgium, Finland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. She explains that understanding what is considered polite is not just helpful, but crucial when it comes to negotiating deals.

Her third book, published in May 2017, gives practical guidance for managers who work within intercultural context and includes new sectors such as health care and education.

With her warm attitude, Dr. Schreiner's advice is an invaluable asset for anyone who is interacting with different cultures. In the wonderfully diverse world we live in, that includes almost all of us.

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