4th Edition

Marianne Roald Ytterdal

CROSSOVER

Practical and Technical English – a Multipurpose Reader

FAGBOKFORLAGET

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TO THE READER

Hello students, teachers & readers.

This 4th edition of Crossover has been renewed and hopefully lifted to a new level during one of Norway's strangest periods ever, the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021. When this edition is published we may still not know the full consequences of the pandemic, or where the coming years will take us.

Still, all countries will need well-educated, ambitious young professionals who have prepared themselves for jobs among their peers, and hopefully you who are reading this will be among them. The upside for students who are waiting for the contagion to subside is that just such a waiting period can be utilised to gather extra information, read more about already familiar subjects and clear the path for new subjects, thus building extra knowledge to bring you well into the post-pandemic era.

The major challenge to be confronted will still be climate change. The new challenge will be getting life, industry, commerce and everything else back to normal, whatever that new normal turns out to be.

At the end of this edition you will find Hávamál, examples of Viking wisdom, originally compiled to prepare young Vikings for life in that dangerous era. I never expected these pages to acquire such renewed relevance. Read and be fortified for the coming years.

The ordinary main subjects are still covered in this 4th edition. Post-pandemic society, too, will need professionals who are well versed in the subjects listed in the contents, and who can give presentations and conduct conversations in these fields. This Reader aims to give you a vocabulary to use as a basis for your professional life.

The Brits may have decided to leave the EU, but English, the lingua franca of international relations, still rules.

Stay safe and choose wisely!

Ålesund, May 2021
Marianne Roald Ytterdal (cand. philol.)

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PART 1

Culture and Human Relations

Doing Business – Same but Different

futuristic dream fremtidsdrøm / framtidsdraum

If you look at the world as one great marketplace, two distinctly different approaches to doing business seem to co-exist when parties meet to trade. This fact has been the subject of many books and pamphlets as the world grows 'smaller' thanks to developments within communications and business. The 'global village' is not just a futuristic dream or a slogan; it is here, now, and we are all living in it. The two attitudes are quite different, and what is good behaviour and respectful actions in one may create confusion and frustration in the other. In one of these business cultures, closing the deal is everything. In the other, the relationship surrounding the deal is extremely important.

Deal-focused Business Cultures

deal-focused avtalefokusert

prior tidligere / tidlegare

Focusing on the deal is a common way of doing business mainly in northern Europe, North America and Australia. These regions cover only a minor part of the world's markets. As more and more companies wish to do business outside their own sphere, we need to know more about what the differences between the various ways of doing business consist of.

When you want to get in touch with businesses in deal-focused cultures, you may well establish contact with companies without having any prior relationship or connection. In the US, in particular, it is enough to put together an information package which demonstrates that your company might become a profitable connection, then follow it up with a telephone call and ask for a meeting. When a meeting has been settled, it is up to the people, products and terms to turn this into a profitable business agreement.

Relationship-focused Business Cultures

If this had been Japan, nothing of the above would have happened. Relationship-focused cultures are common in the vast majority of the world's markets. Asia, most of Africa, Latin America, and the Arab world all do business through personal contact. This has to do with trust, because in these countries people need to know that they can trust their business partners. Family, friends and companies linked to people they know very well will always be preferred. They are quite reluctant to do business with strangers, and even more so if the strangers are also foreigners.

relationship-focused kjennskapsbasert

reluctant motvillig / motviljug

International trade fairs

If you wish to do business in these areas, a letter and a telephone follow-up would be to no avail. However, there are three main ways to obtain the necessary contact in order to have doors sufficiently open to get a chance to present your products or business ideas. One of them is to take part in or to visit an international trade show. There people come for the purpose of finding new products or markets and are therefore more open to negotiating with strangers.

to no avail til ingen nytte /til inga nytte

to obtain å oppnå

International trade fair for solar technology

Official trade missions

trade mission handelsdelegasjon

high-ranking fremtredende / framstående

Another way is to be part of an official trade mission. On such occasions, the managers of the mission will make appointments and see to it that the 'right' people get to meet each other. Official trade missions are always led by high-ranking people, often politicians or industrialists. Members of the Norwegian Royal Family often function successfully as highly respected door openers, an important as well as meaningful role for our monarchy. The official standing of the missions' front figures also signals that the other participants in the group are of the same calibre, and that they can be trusted. Remember that in these cultures the proverb that 'business is people' really is true: personal status and connections mean everything if new relationships are to be established.

The trusted intermediary

intermediary formidler /formidlar

repute anseelse

The third way of getting in contact with companies in relationship-focused regions is to work through an intermediary already in a trusted position. This may be a bank or other institution of high repute. Companies in these cultures simply will not do business with strangers. Because of this, you need either a well-known bank or a high-status individual to introduce you. These third-party introductions may also come from high-ranking people in your embassy's commercial section, or from the chamber of commerce or other trade associations. International law or accounting firms are also good intermediaries, and best of all: one of your golf pals who works for a company that has an office in the relevant country! If, and when, you have got into the situation of actually having met representatives of a firm that may wish to do business with your firm, then you must build positive personal relations with the people in question to prove that you and your company are trustworthy.

Informal vs formal cultures

hierarchical hierarkisk

attire antrekk

The cultural divide between informal and formal cultures also makes for confusion and sometimes destroys potential business relationships. In hierarchical societies, the formalities of appearance and behaviour sometimes shock business travellers from more egalitarian cultures. On the other hand, the informal attire, attitudes and behaviour of these equality-oriented people may also seriously offend their counterparts from the hierarchical culture.

Rigid-time vs fluid-time cultures

The issues of time and scheduling represent some of the most discussed problems around boardroom tables all over the world. Some business cultures live by their appointment calendars and their watches with almost religious fervour. Things must happen on time and at the agreed place; otherwise the opposite party is not considered trustworthy. Words like lazy, undisciplined and rude may also emerge in the explanation for why the meeting was not held.

The other group, however, may come from a culture with a more relaxed attitude to times and schedules, but with strong opinions regarding personal relationships. If they have unfinished or unresolved business at a previous meeting, they will never leave for a new one until everything is settled to everybody's satisfaction in the first group. When they comment on their opposite numbers' behaviour, they may sometimes use words like robots or automatons, and claim that these people are enslaved by their respect for arbitrary points in time and have little or no respect for people and personal relationships.

rigid-time punktlig / punktleg

fluid-time omtrentlig / omtrentleg

unresolved uløst / uløyst

arbitrary vilkårlig / vilkårleg

Management and Leadership

The concept of Management is often defined as the process of controlling and organising a company, an organisation or a situation. Because of variations in culture, size, product range and image, for example, the same management model does not answer all situations. The same management model will not work equally well in a hierarchical, respect-based culture and in a more egalitarian culture.

Today's modern business management needs to be extremely versatile. It has to meet the owners' or shareholders' demand for profitability. The labour unions also want their say about proper treatment of human resources and about job security when new technology is introduced, or when outsourcing appears on the agenda. Messages from and changes in the market must be caught in time.

As branding is becoming an increasingly important part of management, a change in trends must not go unnoticed. It is clearly a very profitable policy to persuade people that they do not want just any soft drink or whichever hamburger. If one can persuade people to ask for a special brand or enter a

management administrasjon

product range produktutvalg / produktutval

versatile allsidig

branding merkevarebygging

business enterprise forretnings-virksomhet / forretnings-verksemd