

Vive La Difference!

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Opinion

Global executives have successfully sometimes and less successfully other times, managed the ambiguous globalization vs. localization dilemma by trying to devise a case by case market typology appropriateness. Market competitiveness imperatives, doubled with theoretical ambivalence over global standardization and local customization have perpetually challenged global managers' strategy contingencies and managerial leadership wisdom. One size fits all solutions are just at the antipode of the holy managerial contextualization imperative. Global consulting firms and scholars have been advising global firm's managers to think and act globally, increasingly acting locally, after getting a full appreciation of the diversity of local cultures. Factually, Fortune global companies are increasingly recognizing that business policies need to be managed within a broad strategic context, while being fully integrated into the local work culture to care for all elements of local content requirements. The ultimate shape of programs and practices, everything from management processes to resources, is hence dependent on national cultures of various countries

in which firms operate. Most obviously, firms are accommodating national cultural differences, while preserving work culture principals that encourage people to effectively execute company's strategic objectives. Global managers are also recognizing the influence of culture and are much better prepared to effectively respond to it, by integrating it into managerial policies and procedures. Hence, one of the constant challenge for global executives would be thinking locally while acting globally, i.e., understanding the cultural spaces in which they are to operate and retool managerial and leadership style. Firms are now increasingly adopting multiple pathways in their quest for globalization, and are acknowledging societal and cultural influences on organizational culture, i.e.; all the conscious and unconscious values, ideas, attitudes, and symbols that shape human behavior at work and the conduct of business. This productive confrontation and integrative synthesis between global and local business paradigms is the evidence that co-identifying societal and cultural influences and co-defining the appropriate organizational culture mix will definitely improve global firms' value proposition, market penetration, and lessen liability of foreignness in host countries.

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