

## Working Successfully across Cultures

### Background

Shearman & Sterling is one of the most successful international law firms. With 19 offices in 12 countries across Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the Americas supporting international clients across the globe, Shearman & Sterling is a truly global law firm.

Shearman & Sterling recognises that working successfully on a global scale requires its employees to possess a unique set of cultural competencies and international communication skills. As part of its global development plan, the firm identified its support staff as the first group to receive training to improve their ability to work with international colleagues and clients.

The Professional Development and Training team in London selected Communicaid, Europe's leading Culture & Communication Skills consultancy, to provide an interactive cultural awareness training programme for its support staff.

### Training Objectives

The core aims of the programme were:

- To increase understanding of cultural diversity and its benefits in the workplace
- To raise awareness of delegates' own cultural values and attitudes and their impact on others
- To develop practical strategies for working more successfully with international colleagues and clients

### Challenges

Key challenges were seen as:

- Devising a short, interactive programme that provided each delegate with meaningful information and practical strategies to implement in their day-to-day work
- Delivering targeted training to a diverse group with varying levels of international experience
- Ensuring that practical examples were relevant to all delegates regardless of nationality

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### Training Approach

A detailed Diagnostic Consultancy with Shearman & Sterling's Professional Development and Training team enabled Communicaid to understand the organisational culture of the firm and the types of cross-cultural interactions support staff had. This information led to the design of a practical and relevant awareness raising programme which would give delegates an insight into their own cultural values as well as those of their international colleagues and clients. The training was based on the key principles of cultural awareness training but also drew on real life examples from specific cultures relevant to the delegates.



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## Proposed Solutions

An interactive programme was designed based on the following key components:

- Understanding culture and core cultural values
- The impact of culture on working practices and relationships
- Assessment of delegates' own cultural values and behaviours
- How to communicate effectively across cultures
- Key tips for developing intercultural competence

## Results

Feedback was extremely positive and delegates left the sessions feeling more optimistic and enthusiastic about working with counterparts from other cultures. They felt they had a better understanding of their overseas colleagues' working preferences which would enable them to work much more effectively together.

## Contact Details

For more information about how Communicaid can assist you and your organisation, please contact our Business Development Team:

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## Client Feedback

"Communicaid's training was particularly interactive and provided our teams with an insight into cultural differences and how to maximise cross cultural relationships."

Margaret Dunmore  
Senior Professional Development and  
Training Officer  
Shearman & Sterling

