

Cross Cultural Team Engagement – India & Europe



Square Peg Support

Team Pioneer explored the implications of being a virtual & multicultural team...

We addressed head-on the challenges and opportunities presented by a 100-strong team of some 13 different nationalities (including large groups of British and Indian team members). Using a ‘packing the cultural laptop bag’ exercise we catalysed open and constructive discussions of the different cultural ‘default settings’ at work within Pioneer. Raising awareness and acceptance of differences laid the groundwork for handling issues when they arose during the life of the project.

...and collectively developed its Golden Rules. Working together the team answered the ‘So what?’ questions raised by the cross cultural discussion and defined their desired ways of working, including a set of Team Pioneer Golden Rules and definitions. These were backed by detailed, practical guidelines around:

- written communication
- conference calls & meetings
- hierarchy & respect
- escalating issues, time & delivery .

The team gained an understanding of PMO expectations... With only 130 working days until go live we took the opportunity to ensure that all members of the team were very clear on the key project milestones and that fit-for-purpose Project Management was required. The Project Management Office (PMO) outlined the disciplines and routines that would be required to achieve project success.

...and had some fun! Following traditional Indian gift giving and some Pioneer recognition awards, the team enjoyed an informal dinner together – including Indian cuisine and tabla & sitar music.

Result

BEiG and Satyam team members clarified their expectations of each other, and understood the implications of working together across cultures and geographies. They used this understanding to identify concrete ways to ensure successful implementation of Pioneer.

The Challenge

With the separation of Birds Eye Iglo Group (BEiG) from Unilever, the business had to re-platform all its activity from telephony to reporting, across eight European countries. The project, known as Pioneer was change at every level of the organisation.

Following the appointment of a new IT service provider partner, Satyam, the new team members had been introduced and started working together with BEiG’s Country Implementation Managers (CIM’s), Business Process Leads (BPLs) and IT experts.

The team’s challenge was to ensure that working relationships maximised time, experience, and ability to move the project forward and hit the aggressive timelines.

Our objective was to facilitate a workshop to ensure that both the Satyam and BEiG team members were aligned and effectively working together to meet the goals of Pioneer.