

**Manager's Shadow Project:  
Brasil ão Vivo 2008**



By

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**GIM 2 Cross-Cultural Management and Leadership/ Manager's Shadow Project**  
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## Executive summary

In the context of the Cross-Cultural Management and Leadership module of the Master of Science in International Management, one of the first Masters Programs to be given by the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland (UAS NW), seventeen of the 33 students enrolled, travelled to Brazil to complete the practical part of the course involving observations of management personnel: the Manager's Shadow Project.

Brazil was chosen for three main reasons. Firstly, it is home to the *Universidade de Caxias do Sul* (UCS), a partner institution to the UAS NW. Also, it is an attractive location as it is one of the so called "B.R.I.C." nations along with Russia, India and China, the upcoming, largely populated, economic powers of the next decade. Finally, an alumnus of the UAS NW, Marco A. Carrino has been one of the "pioneers" of the international exchange program and built strong relations in Brazil.

Brazil is a unique and rather different nation. Its main particularity is its size. It is so large that it is often referred to as a continental country. It is also very special as its population is highly diversified and very heterogeneous in terms of wealth distribution. Its history as a colony, later an empire and also a military dictatorship make for a distinctive culture full of particularities, such as inspired by positivism, that are reflected in Brazilian management.

The trip was initiated to expose students to another culture and to give them the possibility of applying the management theories outside of the classroom to discover how

management and leadership operate in real situations in a nation that is not their own. Additionally, the trip was a way for students to get to know each other better and to practice their soft skills for beginning to build a network in the South America.

The eleven day visit was divided into three distinct parts, each of which was connected to a geographical region. Firstly, the journey took the group to the south, where much of the economic activity is located. Secondly, to São Paulo, home of the financial centre and finally, the voyage ended in Rio de Janeiro where a number the top Brazilian companies have their headquarters. Throughout, company visits and cultural activities had been organised. The particularity of the Manager's Shadow Project is that the group of master students could interview managers to obtain first hand knowledge of what management is.

A questionnaire was developed by the entire class prior to departure from Switzerland and included some of the major theories of management such as the four functions of a manager, Mintzberg's management roles and the three dimensions of skills required for successful management.

With the interviews and observation throughout the duration of the trip, we were able to learn how Brazilians are influenced by their cultural heritage. We saw that a high importance is placed on the people and that personal relationships are essential. We also realised that doing business in Brazil is very different to how Europeans view professional attitude. Participating in this project is an exceptional learning experience. Not to be missed.

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## Acknowledgements

Fortunately, I took part in the “*Brasil Æo Vivo 2008*” expedition and returned a more cultured man. For this I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Marco A. Carrino for his energy and efforts in planning and guiding. To both our accompanying professors: Thomas Burgi and Rolf Meyer for their initiative in realising the course and for making it possible that our group travel so far. To Mercuri Urval, without who’s support I may not have afforded to join. And finally, to all the professionals that gave us some of their precious time and shared their personal, sometimes confidential, experiences with the group.

## Introduction

Visiting Brazil was truly an eye opener. We departed with the intention of gaining insight into international management and returned with much more: great memories of a remarkably enriching experience. While travelling this continental country full of potential, we discovered an appealing culture of human dimension and a people full of energy, with a strong determination to grow. Brazil is amazing and this may be just the beginning.

This paper is a report based on the trip to Brazil that took place between November 15<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> 2008. One of the modules of the Master of Science in International Management delivered by the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland (UAS NW) is entitled Cross-Cultural Management and Leadership. As is typical of applied sciences education, a substantial amount of the subject matter should be taught in a practical way. This is the thinking behind the Manager's Shadow Project and the reason for travelling to Brazil.

To begin with, we will discuss the nature of the course and discern the rationale behind the project and its taking place on the South American continent. Then, we will include some background information on Brazil with the aim of explaining how the country's culture came to be and how it affects Brazilian management. Next, we will cover the methodology of the development of the questionnaire used to interview managers. Finally, we will analyse the key findings before ending with the concluding discussion.

## **Cross-Cultural Management and Leadership**

Along with the spreading of the term globalisation in the last two decades, there has been a very real world economic trend of firm expansion to begin playing in the global field. Today, headquarters in Europe, manufacturing in Asia and distribution in the Americas, is no longer a surprising matter and growth is synonymous to borderless.

Naturally, as firms begin to cross land borne boundaries, the people that run them are led to interact and their different mindsets to connect over common issues. The sometimes strong accumulation of shared values, beliefs and rituals that we refer to as culture are engulfed into a larger dimension conveyed by the organisation under the label of corporate culture with its own set of ideas, principles and practices. Such environments bring diverse individuals together where they work side by side and learn from one another.

The result of this ongoing phenomenon is precisely the reason for the existence of the course we have been following during the first semester. It is essential for young post-graduates entering the global economy to understand cultural differences, know about a person's origins and what makes them who they are. I adhere to the idea that knowledge of people is invaluable in dealing with business.

### ***The Manager's Shadow Project***

As an important part of the Cross-Cultural Management and Leadership course, the Manager's Shadow Project presents students with the opportunity of following and observing a manager by spending over ten days in an organisation of their choice.

This is where the application of the theories covered in the classroom takes place and one can make first-hand experience of real happenings in a professional context with the aim of studying how a manager uses his/her time on a typical day. The essence of this is to understand the functions, roles and skills that a manager has and needs to carry out his/her work.

This year, part of the class, in total seventeen Master students took the chance to complete the Manager's Shadow Project in Brazil.

### ***Brazil rather than Bolivia***

An Alumnus of the UAS NW, Marco A. Carrino holding a Bachelor in international Management, took part in an exchange program with one of the institutions international partners: the *Universidade De Caxias Do Sul* (UCS) in Brazil's southern state of Rio Grande Do Sul. Marco later built work experience in São Paulo which enabled him to develop a passion for the country and its people. Thanks to his contacts and determination, he was able to initiate the *Brazil ão Vivo* (meaning "live") and made it possible for the Manager's Shadow Project to take place in Brazil.

Furthermore, strengthening the international relations of the UAS NW was one of the purposes of the trip. Indeed, our first visit was to the UCS where professors from both institutions could discuss current issues and continue the relationship for ongoing cooperation. Student exchange programs are one example of the international dimension offered by both universities and represent a great value added for prospective students.

Finally, Brazil is one of the four large and upcoming world economies, commonly referred to with the acronym "B.R.I.C" that starts with a "B" for Brazil. These nations, with their sizeable populations are significant in terms of market potential. Additionally, the fact that Brazils' economy, as are the other three, is in transition and that development is well under way provides a strong position for it to be considered as an attractive location for business as it holds infinite opportunities.

### ***A far away shadow that is well worth the distance***

The experience in Brazil differed slightly to observing a single manger in the sense that during our trip, the group was privileged to visit a selection of Brazilian and international companies in three different geographical areas. We were given the unique opportunity to go into businesses, learn about their activities and especially to spend time with the people in charge, interviewing managers with the aim of understanding how they function in their leading positions. I must say that having the Manager's Shadow Project in a setting such as Brazil and being exposed to a number of different industries and sectors is the perfect complement for learning about cross-cultural management and leadership.

## **Trip logistics and data collection**

Our trip to Brazil was divided into three distinct parts. The eleven days that we spent in the country were planned in such a way that we were given the chance to visit three different geographical areas. Firstly, we flew to the southern most state of Rio Grande do Sul where we spent three days. Then we returned to São Paulo where we had transited upon arrival for the next three days. Finally, we went on to Rio de Janeiro for the last days of our stay before returning to Switzerland via São Paulo.

In each of the companies visited, listed in APPENDIX A, we were extremely well received and were told about the company's activities as well as shown around the premises. Finally, thanks to great cooperation and flexibility, our group could carry out semi-structured interviews with one or several of the firm's managers. The aim being to understand the functions, roles and skills that a manager has and needs to carry out his/her work.

When two managers were available, our group was split into two subgroups. Of the 14 companies that we visited, 10 had managers that were willing to be interviewed. This part of the project permitted the highest level of learning and I personally feel that it delivered the most value. Being face to face with a manager and his or her readiness to answer questions about their position and how they carry out their work is truly exceptional and inspiring. The knowledge we could gain through these sessions is an essential contribution to the development of our self-awareness, to building our understanding of cultural differences and to making us better managers for tomorrow.

## **Brazil, background information**

### ***Geography***

Being the largest nation in South America, Brazil covers almost 8'500'000 square kilometres which represents "about half of the surface area of the continent" (<http://www.ciesin.org/decentralization/English/CaseStudies/brazil.html>). With a population density of 20 inhabitants per square kilometre (<http://www.ciesin.org>), most of the land is uninhabited. Indeed, a large area to the south, referred to as the Brazilian Highlands consists of a relatively mountainous plateau inter-crossed with river valleys (<http://www.ciesin.org>). To the north, the Amazon River Basin where the Amazon rainforest is located covers "more than one third of the country's surface area" (<http://www.ciesin.org>). The given geographical formation has led the people to settle along the coastal areas to the east, where the land meets the Atlantic Ocean with 7'491 kilometres of coastline. (<http://www.indexmundi.com/brazil/coastline.html>).

### ***History***

Brazil was "formally discovered and claimed by Europeans in 1500" (Smith 2002 p.1) by a Portuguese fleet, led by Pedro Álvares Cabral who was on an expedition to India. Although indigenous peoples had been occupying the land for centuries, Cabral and his men went ashore and "declared the territory to be the possession of the king of Portugal" (Smith 2002 p.1) on April 24<sup>th</sup> 1500. The country became known for its supply of a hardwood used for shipbuilding and more importantly for the production of a "red dye that was much prized

by the European textile producers” (Smith 2002 p.21). In fact, the dye made “from the bark was know in Latin as “brasile”” (Smith 2002 p.3) hence the origin of the name Brazil.

### **People**

Set up as a colony during the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Brazil was made home to a growing number of white Europeans, mainly from Portugal but also from France and Holland. Inevitably, as the majority of settlers were male, mixtures with indigenous Indian women occurred, giving birth to a people that became known as *mamelucos* (Smith 2002 p.29). Little by little, as the land was being cultivated for sugar and this involved hard work, slaves from West Africa were brought in to do the physical labour. Again, children of mixed race, with white fathers and black mothers, were born and referred to as *mulattos* (Smith 2002 p.29). And so, the diversity of races grew and in the “seventeenth century, there was a tendency to refer to all people of mixed race as *pardos* (‘greys’)” (Smith 2002 p.29). It was not until much later that natives from different countries, particularly Japan, began to immigrate to Brazil. The result is a highly multicultural and diverse population mainly concentrated in urban areas. Indeed, approximately 78.2% (<http://www.ciesin.org/decentralization/English/CaseStudies/brazil.html>) of the estimated 196,342,592 Brazilians (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/br.html>) are living in the cities.

## ***Culture***

The warm tropical climate is reflected in the character of the Brazilian people. They are open to discussion and willing to share. They also show an interest for foreigners and I found those that I was able to dialogue with to be very kind. The country of sun, samba and football is also the land of smiles and a generally positive attitude. Brazilians are welcoming and delight in the simple pleasures of life. They like to eat, to talk and express genuine care for your wellbeing. They also take pleasure in telling about their culture and presenting Brazilian specialities such as Caipirinha and Feijoada. Despite wide spread poverty, those who have will generously give and invite you to return.

## ***Business***

Doing business in Brazil involves much more than trading money for goods or services. Brazilians view professional exchange as long lasting relationships which often extend beyond the commercial context into the personal sphere. Meetings take long to get started as socialising is important and there is usually a good discussion about other matters beforehand. Also, we have been told that time is viewed as less important than in Switzerland and that the habit of being punctual is not always adopted. Generally, we may say that the Brazilian attitude is fairly relaxed although business is taken very seriously.

## ***Economy***

Since the land was ruled by the Europeans, Brazil is an export nation. Throughout history, its products were shipped to Europe and contributed to building the wealth of the crown of Portugal. According to Smith (2002), Brazil was subject to an economic trend that he describes as “boom and bust”: the “concentration on the production and export of a single staple commodity” in an unsustainable manner.

First, there was dyewood (1500-1900), readily available along the coast and usually extracted by the Indians reduced to slavery. Then, sugar (1520s-1830s) was introduced, especially successful to the north where the combination of the rich topsoil and the tropical climate made for perfect conditions. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Brazil was the “biggest producer and exporter of sugar in the world” (Smith 2002 p.22). The sugarcane’s labour intensive handling caused the outburst of the slave trade (1540s-1888) which brought an excess of “2 million West-Africans to Brazil” (Smith 2002 p. 34). In 1695, gold was discovered in the area to the north-east of Rio de Janeiro called Minas Gerais. The so called golden age lasted until the late 1790s and contributed to over “half the world’s supply of gold” (Smith 2002 p. 25). More recently, exports consisted of agricultural produce such as tobacco, rice, cotton, soy bean and especially coffee, which was Brazil’s success story of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Today, exports remain the basis of the country’s economy and are largely composed of agricultural and semi manufactured merchandise. In 2007, 20’000 companies in the southern states alone shared over 160 Billion US dollars in revenue from selling their

products abroad (Professor Dr. Sérgio Lovatto, presentation at UCS on November 17<sup>th</sup> 2008). In comparison, only half of that amount was spent on imported goods. This underlines the importance of the coastal locations as being the heart of the nation's economic activity.

Moreover, the southern states play an important role in the economy as they are the source of most of the country's manufacturing and production and approximately 80% of all man made exports originate in that area where the dominant industries are in the fields of metal works and heavy machinery. This concentration is one of the numerous examples of unbalanced distribution that the country is exposed to. As we have seen, for example with the unevenly spread population, and the enormous social gaps between poverty and wealth that were able to notice during our trip, the economy proves this trend as 80% of it is to be found in only 8 of the 27 Brazilian States (Professor Dr. Sérgio Lovatto, presentation at UCS on November 17<sup>th</sup> 2008).

## **From country to people management**

The nation of Brazil has a very interesting political history. From colony to empire, through military dictatorship to free market economy, Brazil has struggled to obtain its respectful and relatively powerful place in the world. I believe that some of the people involved in the constitution of Brazil have contributed to shaping a unique culture that is reflected not only in its people's way of life but also in their nature and their approach to management.

Looking back at the military overthrowing of the empirical ruler Dom Pedro II in 1889, we can observe that the “provisional government” set up by Marshal Deodoro da Fonseca introduced a number of “important symbolic changes which sought to redefine the nation as a modern federal republic” (Smith 2002 p. 87). One of the signatories supporting Deodoro in the new government was Benjamin Constant, whose inspiration and beliefs were rooted in French philosophy.

Undeniably, the new national flag with the motto: “Ordem e Progresso” is taken from the social thinking of the French philosopher Auguste Comte (1798–1857), founder of the positivist movement. In his lifelong study of man, Comte was inspired by others, in particular Saint Simon and “looked for a reorganization of society with the aid of a new science of human behaviour and of man’s social relations (Copleston, 1975 p. 75).

Through his numerous writings, he later developed a theory of the stages of development of mankind and compared them to the stages of individual maturity. These, he describes as theological, metaphysical and positivist (Copleston. p.78). In the positivist stage of man’s intellectual advance, Comte creates a division between “social statics” and “social dynamics” where the first is a study of the “general laws of existence common to human society” (Coplestone p. 92) and inseparable from biology. The second “studies the laws of the movement or development of societies” (Coplestone p. 92) which relates more to politics.

In his “système de politique positive” (1825), Comte conceives “progress as the gradual development of order” (Coplestone p. 93). His philosophy evolves around the idea that is concentrated in the following citation “L’amour pour principe, l’ordre pour base, le progrès pour but” (<http://www.citations.com/citations-motcle-ordre/Auguste-Comte/ordre--la-formule-sacree-du-positivisme---l-amour-pour-principe-l-ordre-pour-base-et-le-progres-pour-but-300480-365-2-1.html>).

Comte’s goal was a “society in which individuals and nations could live in harmony and comfort” (<http://www.roebuckclasses.com/people/thinkers/compte.htm>) and it may well be that the people of Brazil have been bringing his beliefs to life for over one hundred years. This is still a reality today as the current president, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva declared at the world economic forum in 2007 “it's the possibility of growth, creating jobs and distributing wealth that will create a peaceful world” (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/6301921.stm>).

This idea of progress and the will to move forward is very present in Brazil. I felt that the drive for continuously doing and getting things done, striving for the creation of a better quality of life and reaching for prosperity was all around. Indeed, while interacting with the locals and getting to know a little about them through conversation, one reaches the understanding that they are a people who want to advance.

## **Brazilian management: the “Jeitinho Brasileiro”**

In almost all the interviews we conducted, we could feel the managers' vibrant passion for their work. It is almost as if it is through their roles as managers that they are personally contributing to the advancement of the nation and of its people.

When asked about whether there is a typically Brazilian trait in management, a specific term was brought up several times. It seems as though a word has made itself a place in the Portuguese language and in the Brazilian culture to actually describe this solely Brazilian trait. The term “Jeitinho”, for which there is no translation, describes a very specific characteristic of the Brazilian workforce. According to Armado and Brasil who have studied this phenomenon in 1991, it is “a special way of managing obstacles in order to find a way out of bureaucracy”.

In other words, impossible is not Brazilian. The “Jeitinho” is the motivation that will find a solution to just about any problem and includes the hard work that it may involve. One of our interviewees, Mr. Eduardo Meirelles, a young manager at DIAMOND summarised it in this way: “I don't know how to do it but we will do it”.

Without stereotyping or generalising, one may say that the “Jeitinho Brasileiro” is an intangible yet very visible element of the Brazilian culture and therefore, also a dimension of work and management. From what we have described above and from the insight we were given in Brazil, we can assume that the socio-political heritage of Brazil has helped to

define the culture, which in turn has affected managerial behaviour and the result is pure will. And as the saying goes: "where there is a will there is a way".

## **Management & Leadership theories**

Throughout the development of the Cross-Cultural Management and Leadership course, the class has covered a good number of the most important management theories elaborated by researchers of modern times. From the more famous ones such as McGregor's motivational theory of human behaviour in the work context or Maslow's pyramid of needs, to more complex models such as Belbin's nine team roles, we have learned, discussed and reflected upon them to increase our comprehension of the psychological aspects of management.

This background knowledge would enable us to construct a questionnaire that we would all refer to when shadowing a manager. The class was split into smaller groups, each of which was to come up with a series of questions that would later be reviewed by the entire class, improving the similarities in order to consolidate one single questionnaire.

The principle topics around which the questions were to be elaborated consisted of the following:

1. The four functions of management, as described by Thomas Bateman and Scott Snell (2006): planning, organising, leading and controlling.
2. The three managerial roles according to Henry Mintzberg: interpersonal, informational and decisional.

3. And the three dimensions of Management skills being: technical, human and conceptual.

With these guidelines in mind, the class was able to derive the questionnaire found in APPENDIX B. Throughout our time in Brazil, our various hosts were all very open and the group was attributed almost an hour, in most cases, to address managers on a personal basis. This semi structured interview approach assisted us in finding out how managers really are; how they work and how they lead their colleagues to get things done. It enabled us to develop an opinion of what their attitude is towards management and whether there is such a thing as a "Brazilian management style".

## **Management questionnaire: key findings**

This section comprises a summary of all the responses collected during the various interviews. The aim here is to transmit a general idea of Brazilian views of management by bringing together the reoccurring themes that were mentioned by different managers.

### ***Management style***

Brazilians are hard working by nature. Work is an important part of life and it is not uncommon to work a lot. As on several occasions, for example in post WWII years when national officers attended "training courses in the United States and were influenced by American ideas" (Maddison 1992 p.23) or in the early 1950s when "the [Brazilian]

government maintained a constant exchange rate against the U.S. dollar” (Maddison 1992 p.27), Brazil's ties to the United States of America have filtered down into business. Today, management is inspired by the so called American School: dynamic, profit driven and methodical.

Brazilians however, maintain a very human dimension. Personal relationships are essential and people are open and willing to be close. Working with others is not a superficial issue; it is more than just business. Colleagues tend to be respectful rather than rigorous, often informal and will take the time that is required to really make the interpersonal exchange functional. Although hierarchy is well defined and “there is a valorisation of managerial positions” (Armado and Brasil 1991) it seems that Hofstede's power distance dimension is low. The job title is significant but loses its weight in interpersonal exchange.

One of the issues that may be problematic when doing business on an international level is the lack of planning. It seems that the relation to time is different. Everything has to be done for yesterday and situations are constantly changing. To counterbalance this aspect which could be viewed as a weakness, Brazilians are very fast and have an innate flexibility.

### ***Team work and leadership***

Personal contact is the most important aspect of Brazilian management. Knowing the people you work with and discovering their competencies will facilitate the role of a manager. When he or she is aware of what to ask which team member and understands

what they can deliver and when, a manager is in a good position. Building this relationship with colleagues contributes to the creation of a harmonious environment. As personal interaction is part of the Brazilian culture, working in teams is normal. There is a relatively strong thinking in the Brazilian culture that leans toward collectivism and this is reflected in the organisation. People tend to work together.

When viewed through the eyes of McClelland, I would rate the Brazilian fairly high on all three dimensions of needs. The need for achievement is most definitely present in the Brazilian manager. The need for affiliation, as we have seen through the close personal contacts is also non-negligible. Finally, the need for power may be slightly less obvious although when present, it is more for the collective good rather than individual use.

Production based firms are not comparable to creativity based firms. However, in the later, it is noticeable that managers believe in their employees and there is a general adherence to McGregor's "Y"-type of human nature. Individual commitment is not questioned, rather, it is given. This is the basis for trust and the result is the common practice of empowerment. We have been led to understand that employees are encouraged to feel free, so to speak, about how they do their work.

Uncertainty avoidance is moderately low in the Brazilian way of managing. However, there is the clearly stated openness which enables anyone to ask and to bring issues they are confronted with into the open. It is felt that people are well respected and that the level of trust can be high from the beginning of a work relationship. This was particularly obvious

for the women we interviewed. For example, Hanna Meirelles from VALE where she works as International Recruitment and Projects Manager made it clear that the people she hires have the maturity to work on their own and will turn to ask for help when they need it. Furthermore, Brazilians are easy to converse with and talking is an activity they thoroughly enjoy.

### ***Communication***

Dialogue is the most important element in human relations. Brazilians know this well and they will literally talk (talk and talk) about everything. Exchanging ideas, discussing problems and searching for solutions are all done with oral expression. When diverging points of view arise, here again, discussion is used to hear everyone's opinion and generally share towards consensus.

In fact, this may be one of the reasons why the practice of empowerment is so frequent. Professora Luciana Stallivieri, Head of International Relations at UCS mentioned that she discusses everything with her team. They spend the time that is necessary to speak together, reviewing the tasks that need to be taken care of and the projects that are being worked on. They make sure that everyone is absolutely clear about what is asked of them before going in separate directions to do what needs to be done.

### ***Skills and knowledge***

According to the managers that we interviewed, people skills, also known as “soft skills” are indispensable to becoming a good manager. Listening, understanding and generally interacting with people in a respectful way are some of the key aspects of a sensible manager.

Of course, some of these skills may be learned, others, are more difficult to cultivate. Some, it is believed are actually a part of ones personality. Curiosity for example is a skill that was described as highly important and difficult to learn. Furthermore, authenticity is a personality trait that some managers regarded as indispensable. Being genuine is being true to yourself and to others and this applies to personal and professional life.

In Brazil, a manager should have the ability to be humble although he or she may occupy an important position. One should be able to listen, to learn and adapt and accept criticism as a positive way to improve. Finally, as a manager, a person who is in charge and to whom people look up to as an example, one should be courageous and have the bravery to express ones opinion and stand up for what he or she believes.

### ***Diversity***

In general, diversity in the organisation is viewed as an added value. In Brazil, diversity is omnipresent and it contributes to the cultural wealth of the country. At the end of the day, with growing internationalisation comes the reality of people from diverging backgrounds

mixing and working together. This combination, if handled with consideration, will lead to positive results as the synergy of numerous brains and good intentions can only be fruitful.

## **Conclusion**

The underlying aim of the Cross-Cultural Management and Leadership course is to understand the theories of management and to realise where each of us stands as a potential manager. By this, we imply personal traits and skills that we need to learn or develop throughout our career in order to become good managers. The class work is the foundation on which we can and will build. It is the pallet upon which we arrange the colours of knowledge that we will refer to again and again when going into the real world to paint our own picture of the company and our team as managers.

The Manager's Shadow Project may be viewed as the foundation stone. It is a special set of pigments and brushes that were presented to us. Whether or not we make appropriate use of them, they will help to demonstrate that edge that will distinguish us from others in our work. Our visit to Brazil and the encounters we had with management professionals has shone light on our future, whether it is management or takes on any other form.

Realising that a people's culture has such a strong affect on how they are and act in the business environment is an exciting foretaste of what is to come. When working in an international environment, I am certain that our minds will bring us back to the cramped dressing room made available to us at the last minute for an interview before the beginning

of a concert we attended or the small conference room overlooking Rio de Janeiro's city centre, and we will remember the advice of an experienced manager.

The strong focus on the people, that is a characteristic of Brazilian management, is a lesson of ethical nature and should have made each one of us slightly more sensitive to the fact that business, no matter what a company's core business is, revolves around people.

Conclusively, the mixture of classroom learning and the real world wisdom we may have gained during our trip will contribute to making us people of knowledge and culture. Together, they constitute the so called "yellow bricks" of our promising road to management.

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## APPENDIX A - Brasil ão Vivo: Company overview

In the following section, the companies that welcomed our visit are listed by region, and a brief description of their activity is given.

**Rio Grande do Sul** - the southern most state:

1. **UCS** (University de Caxias do Sul, the FHNW partner institution in Caxias)
2. **MIOLO** winery, (a major player in the Vale dos Vinhedos wine cluster)
3. **VALÉ EUROPA** (*Hotel & Spa do Vinho* running a **Caudalie** treatment centre)
4. **SOPRANO** (a hardware and moulded plastic products manufacturer)
5. **TROMBINI** (an integrated producer of pulp, paper and cardboard boxes)

**São Paolo** – the economic capital:

6. **NESTLÉ** (the recently created Nestlé Nutrition division and the biscuit unit)
7. **BOVESPA** (the São Paolo stock market)
8. **MERCURI URVAL** (specialists in strategy consulting and human resources)
9. **JOHNSON & JOHNSON** (the sewing and surgical needle production section)

**Rio de Janeiro** – the country's claim to fame

10. **TV GLOBO** (South Americas' leading media group)
11. **PETROBRAS** (Brazil's largest company, active in oil exploration, refining and distribution)

12. **DIAMOND** do Brazil (a Swiss enterprise specialised in precision fibre-optics connectors established in Brazil for over 20 years)
13. **WINDSOR PLAZA Hotel**
14. **VALE** (the worlds second largest mining corporation)

Following is a list of the names of the people that we interviewed:

1. **UCS**: Professora Luciane Stallivieri, Head of International Relations
2. **SOPRANO**: Gustavo Miotti, Director
3. **TROMBINI**: Director of the corrugated cardboard unit
4. **NESTLÉ**: Dominik Hug (Nestlé Nutrition) and Fabian Dietrich (Chocolate)
5. **JOHNSON & JOHNSON**: José Lúcio Januzelli
6. **TV GLOBO**: Duda Perraira, (Public Relations)
7. **PETROBRAS**: José Augusto Carrinho, HR Knowledge Management Manager
8. **DIAMOND**: Eduardo Meirelles (New Business Relations)
9. **WINDSOR PLAZA hotel**: Neube Brigagão, General Manager
10. **VALE**: Hanna Meirelles (International Recruitment and Projects Manager) and Alessandra Gadelha (Investor Relations)

## **APPENDIX B - Questionnaire**

Questions worked out by the students for the Manager's Shadow Project of the MSc International Management 2008.

### **1) Manager's background**

1. What is your current role? Since when have you been in this position?
2. How long have you been working in this company? Where did you work before?
3. How many persons are you in charge of/ how many are reporting directly to you?
4. What is your educational background and how is it related with your current tasks?

### **2) Management style**

#### **a) Planning/Organizational Aspects (optional under time limitations)**

5. How do you plan your week? Is there a certain pattern in your weekly work plan?
6. How far are you planning your work yourself, resp. is this task delegated?
7. How do you set priorities of your working tasks?
8. How many hours per week do you work in average? Does this reflect a satisfying balance between work and private life for you?
9. What are the tools which help you to manage your time?

#### **b) HRM/Team Management**

10. How do you define leadership?
  - What are critical issues and problems in leadership?
  - Do men and women lead differently?
11. What do you expect from your employees?

- Do you take a closer look at each project that your team works upon or you are more interested in its results? (Delegation, empowering, Management by Objective)
  - Do you practice delegation to your team and how do you assure that tasks are understood?
  - How do you practice controlling (randomly, systematically)? And why?
12. Have you ever made wrong decision? And how did you solve the problem?
13. What is your and your team's attitude towards change? **c) Communication**
14. What communication channels are you using with your co-workers in general?
15. What communication approach do you use for evaluating their development?

### **3) Managerial skills / knowledge**

16. Is there a particular skill or set of skills that you would describe as "key" to succeed as a manager?
17. Can one develop these skills or are they inherent? Please provide input of personal experience (background, career path)?
18. What special knowledge, skills do you need or use to manage a diverse / intercultural team?
19. Is it a big challenge for you to manage people with different backgrounds?
20. Do you consider diversity an added value or an obstacle?