

# Constructive Intercultural Management

Integrating Cultural Differences Successfully  
Edward Elgar (2021)

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**Christoph Barmeyer, Madeleine Bausch  
and Ulrike Mayrhofer**



# The authors



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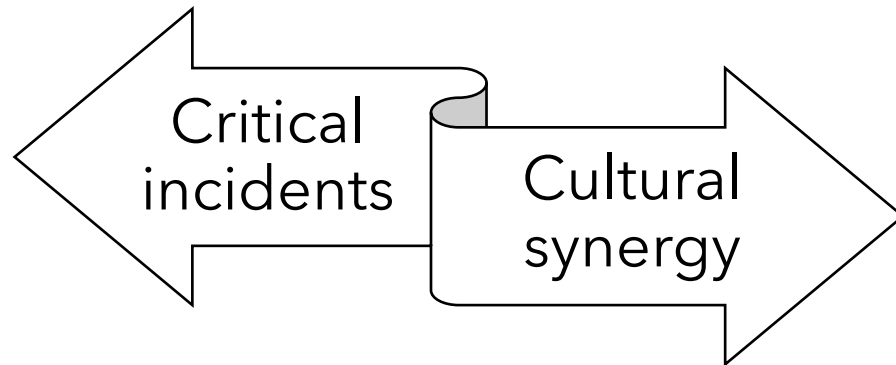


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# Chapter 1: Introduction

# Why organizations must deal with interculturality

Organizations are increasingly permeated by interculturality, which emerges from cultural diversity and reflects the processes and outcomes of diverse groups.



# Effects of cultural differences in management

Content analysis of 400 articles (18 years) in the journal *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*.

<b>Effects of cultural diversity</b>	<b>Theoretical articles</b>	<b>Empirical articles with theoretical assumptions</b>	<b>Empirical articles with empirical results</b>
Negative	50%	42%	10%
Neutral	48%	58%	90%
Positive	2%	0%	0%

(Stahl & Tung, 2015, 397)

# Problem orientation in International Management

„While there are suggestions in the literature that cultural diversity can offer meaningful positive opportunities to individuals, groups, and organizations, we argue - and demonstrate empirically - that the problem-focused view of cultural diversity is by far predominant in research on culture in International Business. In other words, **we know much less about the positive dynamics and outcomes associated with cultural differences than we know about the problems, obstacles, and conflicts caused by them.**“ (Stahl & Tung, 2015, 393)

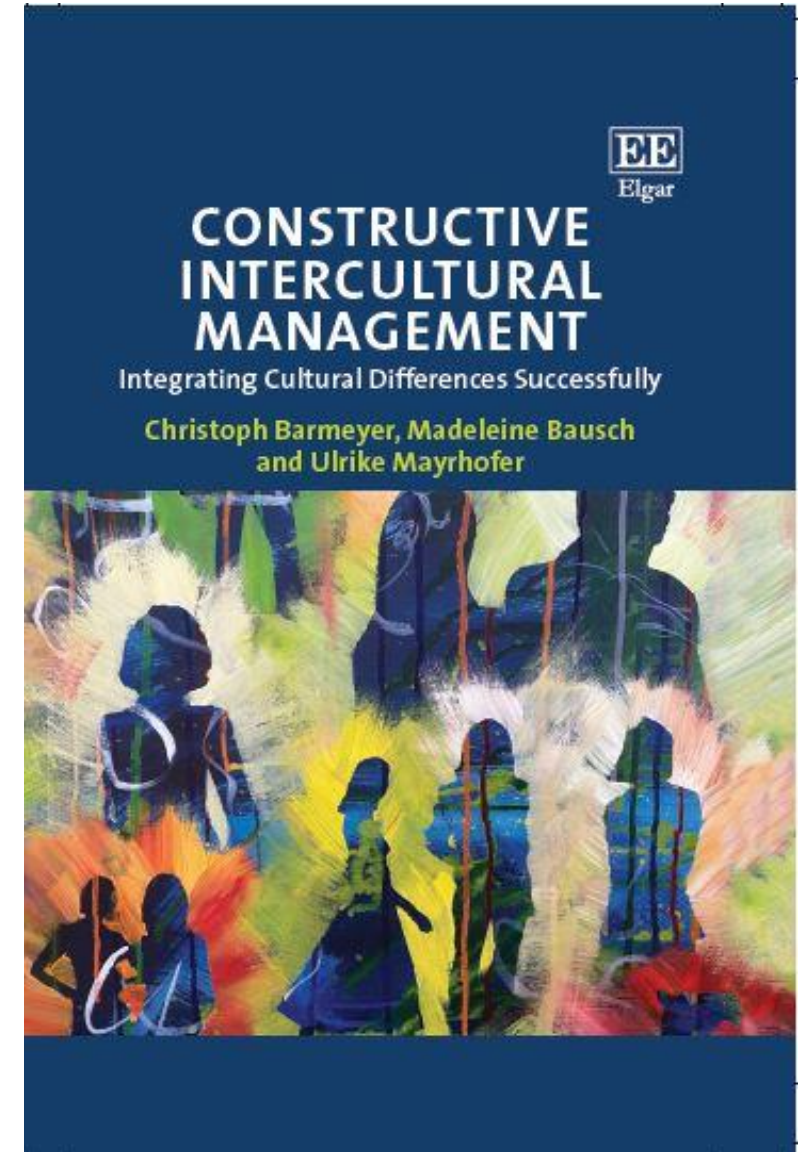
# Constructive Intercultural Management

- Relies on several decades of the authors' research and consulting experience in the field of interculturality
- It is inspired by works on
  - cultural synergy (Adler, 1983)
  - positive organizational scholarship (Cameron, 2017; Cameron & Spreitzer, 2011)

"In contrast to the prevailing problematizing approach in intercultural research and practice, **we consider interculturality and cultural differences as a resource** and take an explicit constructive approach to cultural diversity. We call this new approach **constructive intercultural management.**" (Barmeyer, Bausch & Mayrhofer, 2021, 1)

# Constructive Intercultural Management

“... considers cultural differences as strengths, which, combined in an appropriate way, open the path to creative and innovative collaboration. It assumes that cultural diversity can be enriching and complementary, leading to new practices, innovation and well-being among employees.”  
(Barmeyer, Bausch & Mayrhofer, 2021, 1-2)





# Intercultural Management

<b>Step</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Concretization</b>	<b>Content</b>
1. Awareness and understanding culture and cultural differences	Theorizing and acquiring knowledge about intercultural reality and possible interpretations	Conscious perception, reflection and understanding of cultural characteristics and differences	Concepts and frameworks for structuring and classifying intercultural situations
2. Experiencing through examples and practices	Illustrating and experiencing intercultural reality in different contexts	Experience of functions, roles and situations in organizations	Research findings and practical examples
3. Design and options for strategic action	Achieving the ability to influence intercultural reality	Development and implementation of options for strategic action	Methods, instruments and practices for developing constructive interculturality

(Barmeyer, Bausch & Mayrhofer, 2021, 4)

# The assumptions of this book

1. Consideration of the dynamic aspects of culture and interculturality
2. Inclusion of multiple cultures
3. Interdisciplinarity and multiperspectivity
4. Contextualized perspectives on intercultural interaction
5. Systemic approach

(Barmeyer, Bausch & Mayrhofer, 2021, 2-4)

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# Picture sources

p. 4: [https://unsplash.com/photos/\\_Yc7OtfFn-0?utm\\_source=unsplash&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_content=creditShareLink](https://unsplash.com/photos/_Yc7OtfFn-0?utm_source=unsplash&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=creditShareLink)