

*With an Evaluation Questionnaire, the "Moeller Cultural Change" Project, which was started in 2005, comes to its successful temporary conclusion.*

## Moeller Cultural Change

# "Cultural Change" in Asia?

No!

The initial scepticism of the Chinese concerning the ambitious project soon became comprehensible: in translation, "Cultural Change" takes on the meaning of "Cultural Revolution"! Many small experiences and adventures that we had in the course of this Project for the Development of Company Culture have also taught the ARGO crew many things – and given us cause for joy about the distinctly positive results obtained in Asia.

But let's start at the beginning:

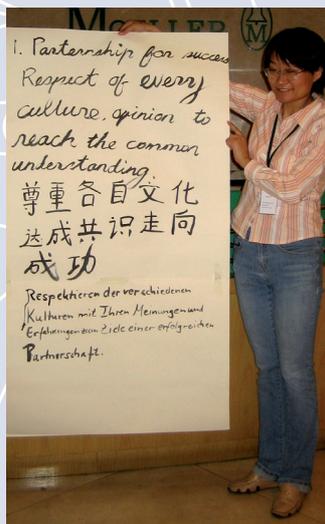
Moeller is one of the world's leading providers of components and systems for power distribution and automation and is part of the American industrial group Eaton Corporation, Cleveland.

After the merger of Felten & Guillaume AG and Moeller in 1999 and the ensuing changeover to the American investment group Advent International in 2003, the way was paved for international growth. It was clear from the beginning that a new common company vision and, as a consequence, a change in the field of culture was required in order to make this new departure successful.

Theo Kubat, CEO of the Moeller Group of Companies, commented on this situation as follows in an issue of the company's internal medium, MoellerMagazin: "In the long run, every organization needs the firmly rooted motivation and identification of its employees. Only enthusiastic, dedicated employees who have developed a genuine 'we' feeling will be able to represent the organization convincingly in the marketplace."

Developing this new "we" feeling was the aim of the "Moeller Cultural Change" Project that was started in January 2005.

First the current state of both company cultures was investigated, individual characteristics and potential supplementary areas were identified. This was the basis for an extensive process of creating a common vision that would



be able to provide orientation and a meaningful company mission.

"We keep power under control!" was the final statement of this mission, which was worked out in a world-wide, structured process of discussion as the core message and the overall term uniting the different regional guiding principles. In the meantime, this message has found its way into many internal and public media of the organization.

A magnificent statement, but the fact that it was developed in world-wide workshops involving employees from all organizational levels and decision-making units shows its true value as a source of a new common understanding and a new common culture of cooperation.

An international rating has measured the current degree of realization of these guiding principles. In accordance with the results, national implementation projects were started and subjects that are currently in focus on an international level were tackled. Reports of successes as well as open questions were regularly collected in supra-regional workshops, which provided occasions for the exchange of competencies and for an international transfer of knowledge.

The goal was to gradually reduce the work being done on a specific culture and, by creating a framework of conditions and competencies, to progress to a point where working from the general basis of this new cultural understanding would be an everyday experience.

The first positive results were documented towards the end of the year 2007 by a new measurement of the degree of realization of the guiding principles. In particular, the results obtained in the Asian region, which had seemed sceptical and far away in the beginning, have served to document the project's success.

In particular, the ARGOnauts' credo of reacting to different and foreign national (and organizational) cultures in a sensi-

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## | *Decision continuum*

*The Decision Continuum is a handy framework for decision-making and may help in the following cases:*

... When decision processes need to be pre-structured from the manager's point of view: Which course do I intend to take in a specific context?

... When a decision needs to be made concerning the extent to which the employees' participation is desirable and makes sense: Which features of the subject in question do I want to discuss on the employee level?

... When expectations about the employees' or the team's participation need to be clarified in advance: How much scope for participation do I give my team?

... When a meeting requires structuring, because the discussion is turning stormy and bringing up irrelevant subjects: What is the framework for the current discussion?

The Decision Continuum from the executive's point of view:

Decisions I have made so far ...	What I want to talk about ...	Continuum
... none yet	... whether from the employees' point of view any-thing should be done at all	Information being collected ↑ ↓ Information being passed on
... none about content	... how employees feel about this matter, providing a basis for decisions to be taken	
... that something needs to be done / to happen	... the details of what exactly should be done	
... when, how, where and by whom action needs to be taken	... the motives for my decision	
... everything	... what the consequences of my decision may be	
... everything	... nothing more, everything has ... already been said	

## | >> *continue TOPIC*

tive, attentive and respectful fashion and to see themselves again and again as respectful students of these cultures has made this development possible.

Although the differences between China, Japan, Singapore and Thailand are quite considerable, let us look at some of the most remarkable experiences we had in dealing with Asian participants:

One of the Asians created a beautiful picture in trying to explain the cultural differences between Europeans and Asians. "A straight line divides a circle into two clearly defined halves. For you Europeans, a Yes is a Yes and a No is a No, for us" – and here he drew a second circle with a wavy line in the middle – "every Yes also contains a No and the other way around. You often have to feel things rather than hear about them".

In Asia, you will basically meet with a good deal of friendliness. But a smile does not always signify sympathy. You only get open-minded and honest feedback when you have established a good relationship, and that requires something that is lacking much too often: time and patience! The events and interventions at the local level included in the project as well as the stable composition of the advisory team have enabled to meet these requirements.

The principle of seniority is something that you learn very soon when travelling in Asia. Breaking this rule is regarded as a lasting faux pas, although it may not be commented upon. For example, age and position decide who has the privilege of walking through a door first. Even for a trainer, this is a good measure of his or her own social standing!

The workshops were held exclusively in the English language.

Although foreign languages are not a serious obstacle, the workshops initially proceeded slowly and with little enthusiasm. Calling in a Chinese co-trainer not only signalled respect but also gave the project a new impetus. As in other cultures, learning a few Chinese words turned out to be a door opener. Writing down the central statements not only in English but also with the help of Chinese characters – painted under expert guidance by European participants from the Central Office – was a particularly valuable experience.

Celebrations are also regarded from a different perspective: You meet for dinner, then the participants go their own way, there is no hanging about, chatting until late at night, which is a much appreciated custom among European participants of high-level workshops. There is a clear dividing line between professional and private matters, which does not imply personal disregard.

Fun and games were a surprisingly important basic element of constructive cooperation. Activating games and sketches were accepted more readily and were viewed with a higher degree of comprehension for their symbolism than they usually are in Europe; in some cases they were even essential for ensuring a concentrated joint effort.

The concrete approach to the initially rather remote international label policy, the intensive and respectful inclusion of Asian locations in the development of label values, the steady support from the European Project leader on the one hand and the Asian Area Manager on the other hand, as well as the ARGOnauts' credo mentioned above can be interpreted as the most important causes for the fact that within the framework of the generally good results of evaluation ratings, the Asian area has scored the largest improvements of all in the spirit of Moeller Cultural Change.



# SOCIALS

## | ARGO summertime 2008

The ARGOnauts were lucky: the night we chose to hold our summer party in the garden of our office building turned out to be the only evening of that week without a thunderstorm. Cocktails, a Caribbean grill and ice



cones helped the numerous participants to get a preview of the imminent summer holidays ...



Attentive ...



... heated ...



... depict ...



... cheerful discussions ...



... from early evening ...



... to late night.

## | Welcome on board!

Another ARGOnaut has joined the ARGO crew: We welcome **Mag. Elisabeth Scattolin** on board! After studying economics and working as Sales Assistant in a big company, she will now support us as Junior Consultant in her dedicated and energetic way.



Elisabeth Scattolin

An ARGOnaut of many years' standing is going to leave us: **Ewald Riedelmayer** has expressed the wish to look out for fresh challenges. We wish him success in his new departure; we will certainly miss him, as will the companies he has been supporting as an ARGOnaut!



Ewald Riedelmayer

**Dr. Antonius Greiner's** book "Im brunnentiefen Grund der Dinge" –Welt der Bildung bei Eugen Fink is just published by Karl Alber Munich/Freiburg. We share our Head of Delivery's happiness! Following the tracks of Eugen Fink and Martin Heidegger, the book is dedicated to answering the question what might be an up-to-date intellectual method of anchoring general education in the modern world.





**candidus**

## | New ARGO Partner: Candidus GmbH

In issue 4 / 08 of ARGO news we reported on our strategic cooperation with the management consulting company candidus in Munich. The Name candidus comes from Latin and means shining, happy and, of course, candid. The name reflects the philosophy of candidus consulting company, which aims to support medium-sized companies by means of individually tailored solutions and thereby make them more competitive and guarantee their future in an increasingly globalized environment. candidus sees itself as a partner of medium-sized businesses when it comes to safeguarding their future through profitable growth. Its complete spectrum of offers in all fields of top management, including IT integration, combines a strong orientation towards concrete realization with the concepts of a top management consulting company.

The enterprise, which shares its new office on Maximilianstraße in Munich with ARGO, is conducted by managing directors Stefan Treiber and Michael Schunda. Apart from the Munich office, candidus also has offices in Bucarest and in Helsinki / Stockholm (Synergia). Among its companies of reference are Bizerba, Knorr-Bremse, Leoni, Metabo and DHL.

*candidus offers the following consultancy services:*



### *Here are three typical case histories of candidus customers:*

1)

*Restructuring a medium-sized mechanical engineering firm*  
Assisted by the clients, the complete restructuring of the enterprise was carried out successfully in 12 months. In the course of this process, cost potentials were calculated, investment alternatives were evaluated, financial engineering was carried out and the effects of these measures on the results situation were simulated.

2)

*Redesign of the production system of a producer of consumer goods*

candidus supported the clients in their strategic repositioning of production and logistics, in the optimization of their production and logistics network as well as in the design of production systems as boosters for continuing improvement.

3)

*Development of a supply chain management strategy for a supplier of car parts*

Development of a supply chain management strategy for the "Independent Aftermarket" with the ensuing design of the relevant processes Planning and Order to Delivery. The Consultancy Services of candidus and the portfolio of offers supplied by ARGO complement each other, depending on whether the focus is on Hard Facts or Soft Facts. The cooperation between the ARGOnauts and candidus promises added value to the customers of both enterprises: 1+1 = 3, that is the declared goal of our cooperation!

## | News / preview

- ARGO **talktime** 2008 will be held from September 22 to 23 this year. Participants are proposing subjects such as Leadership Branding, Analysis of Potential and Leading High Potentials that will provide an opportunity for exchange and input. There are still five places available, we are looking forward to your application at: office@argo.at.
- On October 1 and 2, ARGO will be represented at **Personal Austria** for the first time. We are glad to be able to offer the opportunity of a free SIZE test and many other extras to a wide range of interested people. Come in for a look-see!



## | Flag

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*I am looking forward to your reply!*