

An interview with coach and pilot Heinz Leuters



As CEO of the blowUP media Group, Heinz Leuters set up subsidiaries in Great Britain, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium. Along the way he not only got to know these diverse European cultures well, but also clocked up hundreds of flying hours – as a keen pilot he flew himself to the new locations.

*Based on his conviction that a successful leader needs the same key competencies as an airline pilot, Heinz developed the **You Have Control** concept. Since 2014, he has been coaching managers in the unusual and exciting setting of a Boeing 737 full flight simulator.*

Which three personal characteristics help you to work successfully in an international context?

Being positive about meeting people even if they appear ‘strange’ at first, getting enjoyment from surprises, being able to forget about the ‘ways I’m used to’.

What do you enjoy about working internationally?

in unknown territories, the feeling of being ‘dropped behind enemy lines’ and ‘what I do counts’.

What is the greatest challenge of working in an international team?

Accepting that things are done differently in almost all other cultures and nevertheless achieving the task.

... and how do you tackle this challenge?

Well, through learning and listening and then making a decision and explaining it.

Your host smiles proudly as he explains a dish which you really can't imagine eating.

What do you do?

I had this in Lyon/France when I accidentally ordered **Andouillette**. To answer your question: get mustard!

The strangest situation you've ever been faced with abroad?

Can't really say ... However, after our 5th anniversary in the UK we had a night out in a pub in Oxfordshire with the team. As the CEO I got the honeymoon room with a four-poster bed. As rooms were in short supply two colleagues had to share one room. However one of them mistook my room for the colleague's and crept into my bed, ha! When I politely made him leave, he turned around at the door, apologized and said: "However, many thanks for your hospitality!". This remained the running gag in the company for years.

Any secret tricks or useful tools for making life easier when you're away from home?

Ear plugs – make you comfortable in any hotel.

Your favourite word or phrase in English?

'Just disregard what I was saying ...'

Posted by [Nicola Bartlett](#) on May 11, 2015