

Dear Sietar members and supporters,

SIETAR India has been buzzing with activity this past month! Conference preparations are in full swing and the organizing committee, led by Mala Malkani, is busy getting everything ready for February. You can look forward to updates in monthly newsletters leading up the conference. Learning events are also taking place across India so look out for announcements for events in your city!

UPDATES

We had a learning event on the "Sociology of Indian engineers" by Roland Lardinois of the CNRS (a premier French research institute) in Delhi at the Goethe Institute on November 6th thanks to the dynamism of our Delhi team coordinated by Line Mark Rugholt. The topic is indeed extremely relevant since the India growth story has been riding to a large extent on the brainpower provided by its engineers, but who and where does this Indian engineer come from? To know more, you can find a summary of the event on the SIETAR India website under Events.

Registration for pre-conference workshops is now open! Participants have a choice between two workshops, including a half day and a full day option. The half day workshop on "6 Key Attributes of Global Leadership" will be facilitated by Muriel Joseph-Williams. The full day workshop on "Personal Leadership – Making a World of Difference" will be facilitated by Heather Robinson. For more information and to register, please visit the website preconsietarindia2013.doattend.com.

REMINDERS

Early bird registration for the conference ends on December 10, 2012. Save by purchasing your ticket before the deadline at sietarindia2013.doattend.com.

EDITORIAL - Film Review

Review of the Bollywood film "English Vinglish" by Sunita Nichani

The topic of cultural dimensions (individualism vs collectivism, monochrone and polychrone) is almostde *rigueur* in intercultural training workshops. Most of these models remain quite theoretical in the minds of our Indian participants. As I watched the film "English Vinglish", I saw some great examples of these dimensions being acted out and am delighted that some of these scenes can be used to illustrate these dimensions in a way that will resonate with Indian audiences. Please note that like with most films that portray another culture through the eyes of a foreigner, some of the situations and characters might seem a bit exaggerated or even culturally inaccurate. However, the film has many select scenes that would be a great resource for intercultural trainers looking for ways to connect theory and application. So read on!

This film by Gauri Shinde is a heart-warming tale of how an Indian housewife, played by Sreedevi, discovers her hidden potential after landing in the US and learning the English language. The film can be used for a variety of training objectives: questioning existing stereotypes, ethnocentrism or how the film accurately or inaccurately depicts cultural differences.

Being part of a collectivist culture, Sreedevi puts her family's needs before her own and her individual efforts are often unrecognized or even mocked by her family at home. She is an excellent cook and in India she sells her specialty "laddos" (an Indian dessert) during weddings and other festivals. During her first English language class in the United States, her English instructor asks her what she does (individualist orientation) and Sreedevi, not used to talking about her individual accomplishments, sheepishly confesses that she sells "laddos." Her English instructor provides her with the term "entrepreneur" and her face lights up at this definition of her individual identity. This theme is quite recurrent in the movie and can be used in discussions on how to leverage the best of both individualism and collectivism. For example, after having discovered the joys of individualism such as "me time," personal development, individual accomplishment, Sreedevi does not ball out on collectivism. On the contrary, she explains the core philosophy of collectivism in her speech at the wedding of her niece.

Yet another dimension is beautifully illustrated in the scene where Sreedevi orders a cup of coffee in New York for the first time. To see the differences between monochronic and polychronic attitudes, I encourage you to watch the film!

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