GOING GLOBAL

Global Expansion in 2019

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to Hale Stewart, writing for seekingalpha.com, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has released their latest general assessment of world economy. The report noted that this was the best year for global growth since the Great Recession with the expansion synchronizing across countries. CEOs and executives across the world are contemplating their next moves—and wondering how to move their organizations forward and into new territories. Global expansion is real, immediate, and happening all around us. Are you considering opening up new territories for your organization?

Here are my three rules for Global Expansion:

1. **You don't know what you don't know.**
2. **Don't reinvent the wheel.**
3. **Plan, then adjust.**

I've seen too many companies approach global expansion the hard way. They decide they're going to expand globally and then try to go it alone. They don't try to find out what they don't know. They don't look at how other companies succeeded and failed. You can save yourself a lot of agony if you learn from the experience of others.

Success leaves clues, and so does failure. Here are two examples.

The first one is the case of WalMart's entry into Germany. Like too many other companies, WalMart figured that what worked at home would work in a different country and culture. In the United States, there are WalMart employees stationed just inside the entrance to every store. Their job is to greet people as they enter the store. That works very well in the United States where it's perceived as friendly and an appropriate way to start your shopping experience.

But that same tactic didn't pair well with the German sense of independence when shopping for something. In Germany, you ask for help if you need it. Too much attention from a salesperson makes someone in Germany feel pushed to buy something and therefore annoyed.

WalMart executives assumed that the same people-centered practices that worked in the United States would work anywhere. They found out that you could only count on that if the people were Americans. German consumers weren't the only ones who had problems with WalMart's way of doing business. German WalMart employees thought that the daily staff warm-up sessions were ridiculous. And, it probably didn't help that the executive WalMart chose to run the expansion into Germany didn't speak a word of German. WalMart abandoned the German market in 2006.

As an American, I can tell you that WalMart is famous for both its persistence and for learning from its failures. So don't count them out forever. One company they could learn from is IKEA, the Swedish furniture giant.

Like WalMart, IKEA thought that the success formula they developed at home would work in the United States without any changes. They got part of it right. When IKEA first entered the United States in 1986, people loved the design of the furniture, but they felt it was too tiny for American living spaces. IKEA's (literally) one-size-fits-all approach, which works well throughout Europe, needed to be adapted to the US market, which wasn't as easy as it sounds.

IKEA redesigned the furniture, but then they had to redesign the warehouses where the furniture would be stored and the retail spaces where it would be sold. Everything had to get bigger.

These two examples have one thing in common. Both IKEA and WalMart made the mistake many companies make: They thought that what worked in one country or culture would translate to another one easily.

But while WalMart tried to stick with the things that worked at home, IKEA changed things, so they fit the new country. I want you to begin to think more like IKEA when you have finished reading this paper. And, because you don't know what you don't know, we need to cover some basics. I'm going to answer some of the questions I field almost every day.

Then, I'll give you some insight into what's happening in the markets that many people feel are hot right now. That's background material. Watch for things that surprise you. That's where the best learning happens. You should discover some things you didn't know.

Once you have some background, you should begin thinking about how to plan wisely. We'll move on to important issues you need to consider when you're thinking about entering any new market. Every situation is different. I'll outline five separate factors you should analyze.

I developed what I call a "US Cultural Gravity Model" to help international clients expand into the United States. I'll share this specific model, and I'll explain how you can create your own model for any market you're interested in entering.

I'll wrap up the white paper with specific tips, strategies, tools, and resources you can use to increase the odds of successful global expansion.

QUESTIONS EXECS ASK

So, what do you want to know? I meet a lot of executives all around the world. They ask a lot of questions, but the most common ones are below.

Let me answer them for you.

Which markets make sense?

It depends. Remember Walmart? They thought Germany made sense and it should have. Germany is a large country with a robust economy and a strong legal and regulatory environment. But a market only makes sense if you're willing to learn what you don't know, follow the tactics of companies that have been successful, and adapt your plan as needed.

What will be my return on investment?

It depends. Countries have different cultures but also various tax structures, laws, and regulations. IKEA started in Sweden. Tax considerations, incentives, and labor laws as are part of the reason companies decide to invest in a particular location. For example, BMW was looking at expanding to Eastern Europe but decided to instead build a plant closer to home in former East Germany. Although costs may have been less in Poland, they believed the culture and lack of anguage barriers in East Germany would compensate.

How can I best enter those markets?

It depends. Germany was a disaster for Walmart, but they do business in 27 other countries outside the United States. Target, another U. S. retailer, botched an expansion into Canada. Look, here's the problem. High-level, general questions about where and how to expand across borders don't help you. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't ask high-level questions. The trick is to ask different questions. Here are more useful questions to ask.

Ask Instead: What kinds of markets make sense for us?

What are the characteristics of markets where we're more likely to be successful? Further in, I'll give you a list of things to consider, but the fundamental questions will stay the same. Analyze your company, with your strengths and weaknesses and experience. Consider your strategy. Then look for markets where you're more likely to succeed.

Ask Instead: What's a reasonable level of risk and reward for us?

Companies have different tolerances for risk. They have different expectations of reasonable Return On Investment (ROI). And remember that for most expansions you should expect ROI to increase as you do businesses successfully in a new country.

So, here's a homework assignment.

Analyze your own company. Highlight your strengths and weaknesses. Analyze your tolerance for risk and your expectation of reasonable reward. This takes a while to do if you do it formally, but you can probably make some rough-cut predictions in a meeting or two with knowledgeable people.

Whatever predictions you come up with will be preliminary. As you do your research, you will loop back and modify them, but they're a good place to start.

Next, make a list of the countries where you may want to expand. Then you can start doing some background research. You may get some ideas from this white paper that you can add to the ideas you already have.

Make an appointment with yourself that for 15 minutes every day during the next month you'll scan international news, go to websites, read *The Wall Street Journal, The Financial Times,* and *The Economist*.

Look for stories about the countries on your list. Scan for stories about companies from your home country who do business in the countries you're considering. Find out more about them. Take notes.

Even better, have several executives at your company do the same thing. Then compare notes once a week.

By the end of the month, you will have developed an intuitive sense of how things are in the countries you're researching.

Remember, you're not looking for generic "great opportunities." You're hunting for clues about what global expansion makes sense for your company and your strategy.

Now, with that in mind, let's look at some of today's "hot markets."

HOT MARKETS

The one common question we have not yet addressed is: "What are the hot markets for global expansion?" One problem is that the word "hot" is hardly ever defined. So, before I try to answer that one, I want to describe what "hot" means when I use it in this paper.

"Hot" is a fashion statement. When someone asks me about "hot" markets, he or she may mean, "What are the most popular markets for global expansion, today?"

"Hot" is also a description of economic condition. Usually, the person asking the question wants to know about which countries have fast-growing economies. The idea seems to be that companies can enter a high growth market and "ride the wave" of growth to success.

If only it were that easy.

By now you know that I think there's no general correct answer when it comes to picking the market where you will expand. So I expect you to use the following as a starting point for analysis instead of looking for a quick and easy way to pick the location for expansion.

For most of the last twenty years, the hot markets for expansion have been in the world's emerging economies. In 1990, they accounted for less than one-third of world GDP. By 2013, emerging economies accounted for more than half of world GDP (measured in purchasing power) and that GDP was much larger than 1990. The stars of that growth were the so-called BRICs.

BRIC

As you probably know, BRIC stands for Brazil, Russia, India, and China. Jim O'Neill, the head of global economic research for Goldman Sachs, originated that acronym in a 2001 analyst report titled Building Better Economic BRICs. When O'Neill coined the term, the BRICs accounted for about 8 percent of world GDP. Today it's more than double that.

All of those economies are giants today. They're among the ten largest economies in the world. But they're not growing as rapidly as they once did. In part that's because the more significant an economy gets, the harder it is to generate high growth rates. In part, the slower growth is because the economies have run up against some natural limits.

And things change. Growth presents new challenges and opportunities and exposes weaknesses that weren't obvious before.

The BRIC markets are still popular expansion choices, even though they're not growing the way they did for a couple of decades. Market conditions can change rapidly. I'm writing this whitepaper in early 2018, but things may vary a great deal before you hear it. Make sure to do your due diligence and update any forecast that's more than a couple of months old.

Brazil, hampered by skyrocketing costs, inflation, consumer debt and sclerotic economic policy, is struggling to maintain any growth at all. Three years ago, gross domestic product was expanding at a 9 percent annualized rate. Today it's waddling along at 1.4 percent.

Russia, an oil oligarchy subject to the whims of the global energy market, had annualized GDP growth of more than 9 percent as recently as 2008. Now it's crawling along at barely above 2 percent. Everything about Russia is complicated by the politics of the country.

India's current annualized growth rate of 4.5 percent is less than half of what it was as recently as early 2010. But there are positive signs. The government is working on loosening the labor and environmental regulations that worked against growth.

China, the driver of global demand, needed to slow its own growth to stave off inflation and asset bubbles – but it might have overshot to the downside. The economy, which was expanding by nearly 12 percent a year as recently as 2010, is now struggling to break above 8 percent. Even so, this economy is so big that there should be lots of opportunities.

Malaysia

Singapore is still a booming market, but its less well-known neighbor, Malaysia, has been named the number one place to invest by US News Report. Real estate opportunities abound, and there is well-educated, multi-lingual, workforce. Additionally, the government is foreign investment-friendly creating incentives and eliminating barriers to doing business there.

The Czech Republic

$125 billion has been invested in the Czech Republic over the last 20 years. The government offers training and job-creation grants, and the workforce is young, dynamic, and multilingual. Many tech companies are expanding there, too.

Sub-Saharan Africa

If you're looking for moonshot growth potential – and have a huge appetite for risk – then an attractive area might be the countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Sub-Saharan Africa is abundantly rich in commodities such as oil, natural gas, copper, iron ore, and gold. Governments are becoming more stable. The area has the youngest workforce in the world.

MORE TRADITIONAL MARKETS

Many companies are still expanding to cities in what I would call traditional markets: Ireland, Denmark, and Canada. These markets are "easy" in that they hold more convenient and modern infrastructure, and there are large, hungry talent pools.

And, of course, there is the United States, which is still the world's largest economy. I even wrote a book on this one: *Market Entry into the USA: Why European Companies Fail in the US Market and How to Succeed*. (Available in German and English on Amazon.)

When you think about global expansion, remember that the "hot" market of today won't stay that way forever. You have to decide if the market is right for you. You should analyze several key issues for every market you consider.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER

There are many different ways to assess the external environment for doing business either in your home country or another country. Almost all of them use an acronym to help users remember all the dimensions.

One of the earliest was STEP (Society, Technology, Economics, and Politics), which later added an E for Environment and became STEP-E. More recently PEST (Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, and Technological) added Environmental and Legal to become PESTEL.

Those systems and acronyms have their place, but they've always seemed very academic to me. I prefer to be more straightforward and practical. So I don't have another fancy acronym for you to remember, but I do have a list of five kinds of issues you should consider when you analyze a market for potential expansion.

Politics

Let's start with politics. This is the political and regulatory environment. How do the established laws and regulations affect the way you will do business?

Every year, the World Bank issues a report on how easy it is to do business in 187 different countries. The report measures how the regulations in ten areas affect the ease of doing business and ranks countries accordingly. The categories measured include: Starting a business, dealing with construction permits, getting electricity, registering property, getting credit, protecting minority investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts, and resolving insolvency. The report also measures labor market regulation but does not include it in the rankings.

In the 2018 report which covers the period through June 2017, New Zealand is named the easiest place to do business. The United States was ranked 6, Italy 46, and India 100. The best rated BRIC country is Russia at 35. Mauritius, one of the less talked about areas of Sub-Saharan Africa to do business ranks at 25.

It's important to dig down to the details to discover how the government is involved in business. China, for example, has state-owned companies. In South Africa, the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) initiative is taken quite seriously and prioritizing job, and economic opportunities for Black South Africans is a very important aspect to investing in the country. Government officials are going to ensure requirements are fulfilled.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is the physical environment which can make things easy or more difficult. Transportation, communications systems, sanitation, water, and the electrical grid are all examples of infrastructure. When the systems are sound, it makes it easy to do business.

It's not enough to know the rating of a particular country's infrastructure. Once again you've got to get beyond the underlying numbers to how the details of the infrastructure will affect your business and the people who work for you. In many emerging econo-mies, reliable electric service is rare.

If you expand there, will you need to provide your own, reliable electricity, or will you allow for the disruptions that blackouts and brownouts can cause?

Here's another example. In India and Brazil, there is a young, well educated, workforce hungry for opportunities, but logistics is a significant concern. Many high-tech firms provide transportation for employees to minimize downtime and maximize productivity. Traffic is very congested in the cities, and it can take hours to travel back and forth to work sites.

When you're analyzing infrastructure, you should consider the effect on your operations and also on your people. Ask yourself what special things you will need to do so your operations will run profitably.

Safety

Safety is essential everywhere, but it's an especially important consideration in Latin America and Russia. In some parts of the world, kidnapping executives is a growth industry. Foreign executives make good targets. They usually work for companies who will pay a ransom. And because they're not familiar with the area, they may put themselves in danger without realizing it.

Security has two aspects whether you're analyzing the situation with people or facilities: Threat level and prevention. First, what is the threat level? Once you've assessed the threat level, you can develop tactics for preventing an incident or for dealing with one.

Society

Society is mostly about the strength of family ties. In countries where the people have powerful ties to family, the workforce may be less mobile which will affect recruiting. You may have to make provisions to include flex-time and support familial connections in countries where family ties are especially important.

There are many cultural aspects that influence the success of business negotiations. How quickly relationships are built, motivators for driving business, and the importance of third-party introductions.

Be aware that drivers may not always be money but considerations of which you may not have been aware. It's imperative to have conversations with local partners to determine the best path forward.

Understanding the culture can be your launching pad to success. But there are many hidden traps in every culture. I developed my "US Cultural Gravity Model" to help my clients sort things out when expanding to the United States.

US CULTURAL GRAVITY MODEL

Studies show that 70 percent of our communication-style is based on our cultural values and beliefs, and therefore, the way we naturally build relationships, make decisions, provide and expect service, are all culturally determined. And that's not all.

Culture influences the way an organization is shaped and formed, and there are elements of national cultural values and beliefs in a company's DNA. The deciding factor in a company's belief system is dependent on where that firm was founded and currently headquartered.

The purpose of the US Cultural Gravity Model is to help you analyze how the culture of your company (based on where you were founded and where you are headquartered) and the products and services you provide will be perceived in a market you may want to enter.

For example, let's say you're a German-founded and headquartered software company considering entering the US market. How are US customers likely to perceive your product?

US customers would say that your software is extremely high quality and technically sound. That's good. But they are also likely to say that your software is not user-friendly enough for the US customer.

That's how many people from the US think about German products. They respect the quality of German products, but they perceive the products as unneces-sarily complicated. That makes sense.

According to intercultural research, Germany's most prominent national cultural values are "attention to quality," "thoroughness," and "process-orientation." If you produce products in accord with those values, you are likely to increase complexity, which can reduce user-friendliness. That's OK for a German, but not for a US customer.

US customers (and companies headquartered in the US) have different values. They love "convenience," "pragmatism," and "speed." How are customers with those values going to react to products produced with the German values in mind? That's right, they'll perceive them as overly complex. There will also be conflicts between the way people in German companies work and the way their counterparts in US-based companies work.

In the US, the process of solving problems is typically more "trial and error" than in Germany. Americans are "results-oriented" where Germans tend to be more "process-oriented." To get the flavor of how this can play out, let's imagine a meeting between teams from a German company and a US company that have decided to work together.

The purpose of the meeting is to agree on a marketing issue. The Germans go first, and they begin by describing their original assumptions and research methodology. Then they describe the research process in detail. The Americans in the

audience will be thinking, "When will these people get to the point?" When it's the American's turn to present, they begin by sharing the conclusion they reached after months of research. The Germans in the audience will be thinking, "Wait a minute. How did they get to that?"

When these two styles come together, it can cause a frustrating misunderstanding – a clash between "let's just do it" versus "let's calculate the risks, plan, then do it." The lesson for a German company is that the key to working with a US company is to start with the result first. Too much process will overwhelm them. Milestones leading to a solution should be end-goal focused, not process driven.

I developed the US Cultural Gravity Model to help a European company make some sense of the US market so they could expand to the US effectively. I called it "Cultural Gravity" because culture, like gravity, is a natural force and one we're not likely to notice unless we pay attention.

There are other "quick" cultural assessment tools, but most of them have a large number of variables and areas to consider. I wanted a tool that had a maximum of four values because that's what decision science suggests is the maximum number of variables that a human being can consider at one time.

You can use the model to help make sense of any culture that you want to understand. Here's how it will work using the example of a company from another country considering an expansion into the US market. If that company wants to be successful in the US market, it has to consider the following factors: Convenience, Speed, Risk, and Emotion.

Convenience refers to user-friendliness, the ease with which products are accessed and used. It can also refer to the sales process. Remember Walmart? Walmart trained cashiers to smile at every customer and thank them for shopping at Walmart. That works fine in Kansas City, but Germans in Cologne thought it was fake and maybe a little creepy.

Speed is important to Americans, as in "How quickly can the buying cycle turn-around?" And there's Risk. US consumers are willing to try out new ideas and products as long as they are easily disposable or changeable. That can be a big advantage if you have a new business idea.

US customers buy with their heart first, and head last. Even if your culture is different, you should approach Americans with an emotional appeal first and then support it with facts.

Now, that's how I used the US Cultural Gravity Model to help European clients enter the US market. What if you want to enter a different market?

Then you can construct your own Cultural Gravity Model for the market you're thinking of expanding to. You'll use intercultural research to determine what four things you will put in the smaller circles. That will come a little later, though.

You should start the process by assessing your team's Global Mindset.

GLOBAL MINDSET INVENTORY

The Global Mindset Inventory was developed at the Thunderbird School of Global Management. They were early leaders in thinking about what it means to do business and manage people from a different culture.

The school was founded in 1946 as The American Institute for Foreign Trade. That's how most people thought of doing business in another country. In 1962, the Harvard Business Review even published an article titled "Analyzing Foreign Opportunities."

That began to change in the 1960s as jet travel and better communications made dealing with customers or plants in distant countries much easier. In 2005, a group of professors at Thunderbird, led by Dr. Mansour Javidan, started an ambitious research project to define the "Global Mindset" that global managers would need to succeed. They defined the Global Mindset as:

"The ability to influence individuals, groups, organizations, and systems that are unlike the leader's."

This important research described the Global Mindset as based on three areas of "capital." Intellectual Capital is "general knowledge and the capacity to learn." Psychological Capital is "openness to differences and capacity for change." Social Capital is "ability to build trusting relationships with and among people who are different from you."

A 76-item "Global Mindset Inventory (GMI)" helps people assess their own mindset. I suggest that you use the GMI to gauge the status of your team's Global Mindset.

The GMI measures Intellectual, Psychological and Social Capital to reveal both strengths and areas for development. GMI also coaches individual assessment-takers to interpret their results and create a plan of action.

The tool measures the ability to:

- **Assess new markets**
- **Understand customer behavior**
- **Negotiate with vendors**
- **Secure contracts and commitment**
- **Navigate cultural nuances**
- **Build long-term business relationships**
- **Run complex projects**
- **Manage high-performing teams**

You'll do a better job of constructing your Cultural Gravity model if you start by assessing your team's Global Mindset. To help you put those together and develop an effective action plan, I'll share some expansion tips and strategies.

TIPS AND STRATEGIES

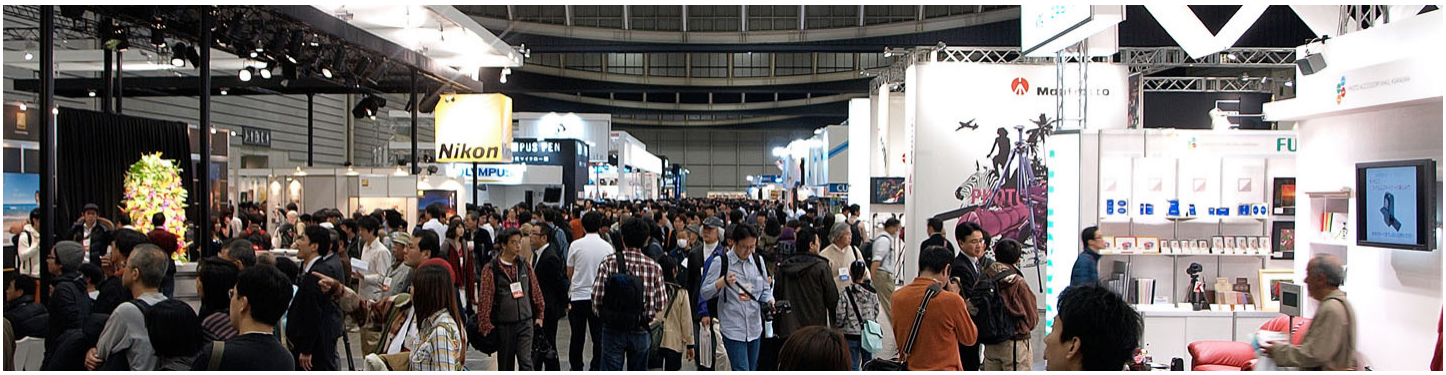
Expanding to a new market is challenging, and it's more art than science. We know there are some things that will increase the odds for you.

- **Spend time discovering what you don't know.** Take my challenge from early in this white paper and spend 15 minutes a day for a month saturating yourself with news about the market you want to enter. Pay special attention to the successes and failures of other companies who have tried to expand to the same market.
- **Remember that there is no generic best market or best strategy.** So look behind and beneath the basic numbers to really learn about the market and how well expanding there fits with your company and your strategy.
- **Use tools like the Cultural Gravity Model and the Global Mindset Inventory** to gain insight into your company and the challenges you face.

The items below are other things you should consider. They don't fit in any particular place in the process. You might consider them during your early research or after you're well into your planning process. They're not in any significant order.

- **Third parties** are people who make introductions, help build trust, and smooth your way into a new market. In the US we sometimes call these people "Champions." Third parties are especially important in Asia, but they can be extremely valuable in any market.
- **Economic development** agencies and other government agencies, even embassies, can help in finding green or brownfields, real estate, lawyers, and consultants. Most importantly, they can negotiate with local officials and provide information about local conditions.
- **Market research firms** can support your efforts with insight into supply and demand but can also expand to workforce trends and societal considerations. This kind of research is important but don't neglect the personal research that builds your intuition or the importance of visiting the market yourself.
- **Find other companies** that have entered the market successfully or who have tried and failed. Study what they did, what worked, and what didn't. Network with people from those companies for insights you'll never get from an article. When you're on the ground in the country you're considering and question local people for their perspective on what worked and didn't for other companies.

Once you've started doing business in the new market, leverage the knowledge of the people working there. One of the activities I do with an energy company is to bringing in what we call "Ambassadors" to the leadership development program. They leverage the knowledge and advice of employees onsite about the regions they come from as the company expands into those markets further.



THE GO-TO-MARKET READINESS SURVEY

I've created a self-assessment leaders planning expansion can use to determine their levels of awareness, knowledge, and skills as they pertain to the countries chosen. Take your time to answer the questions to the best of your ability. I recommend discussing it with your go-to-market team. Below is a general summary of where you are in the process based on your answers.

Circle your answer (1 = not at all, 6 = completely)

1) Are your company's values aligned (or can they easily be adapted) with the Gravity Model of country X?

1 2 3 4 5 6

2) Do you know your product's uniqueness and sustainability quotient for market X?

1 2 3 4 5 6

3) Are you clear about the difference in customer value vs. company value?

1 2 3 4 5 6

4) Is your value proposition a strong one, according to what market X values?

1 2 3 4 5 6

5) Do you understand who your customer is and what they value most?

1 2 3 4 5 6

6) Do you know the competitor landscape for your business in country X and do you know where you need to be located for strategic market dominance?

1 2 3 4 5 6

7) How well can you protect your service against the competition and do you know if the need for your service will continue?

1 2 3 4 5 6

8) Do you know what your barriers to entry are and do you have solutions to enable movement into market X more easily?

1 2 3 4 5 6

9) Are you clear about your investment-to-risk ratio?

1 2 3 4 5 6

10) Does your personnel have a global mindset and are they prepared for the differences in communication, legislation, and requirements?

1 2 3 4 5 6

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YOUR SURVEY RESULTS

10-26 Low Readiness

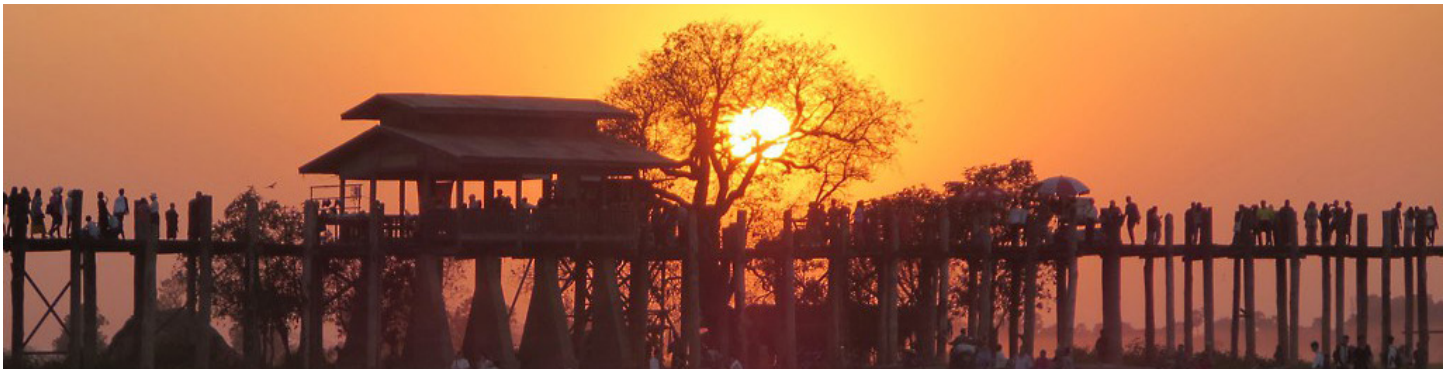
Your company may not have considered all the aspects to entering market X and have little or no knowledge to how that market works. Recommendations: Spend some time interviewing those who are successful in market X, hire a market research or consulting firm to perform a market analysis, read up on or sign up for a workshop on country X's business culture.

27-43 Moderate Readiness

Your company may be ready to approach market X however it is important now to concretely identify the gaps in readiness. Recommendations: Go to country X and present your business idea to potential business partners, customers and investors, let them give you feedback on the feasibility/relevance of your product(s).

44-60 High Readiness

Your company is ready! Recommendations: The selection criteria for managers and employees sent over in the start-up phase is critical, make sure you have the right people on board at the start. Also, consider an exit strategy. It is common to strategize a company's exit, re-tool, or re-organization in the case that entry doesn't go according to plan.



CONCLUSIONS

Let me sum up what I hope you will do now after you've read this white paper.

1. **Do your due diligence and market research**
   Use all the sources and all the tools we've talked about in this webinar to learn as much as you can about yourself, your company, and the market you're considering.
2. **Travel to the location you're expanding to**
   Reading is not enough. You won't get a real feel for the place you're considering unless you go and spend some time. When you go, don't just talk to other businesspeople who are staying at your hotel. Get out and spend time with some local people.
3. **Do something different**
   I don't know what that will be for you, but make it something beyond what we've talked about here. Come up with a way that is uniquely you to learn more about the country where your company may expand. Only you can come up with something that fits your personal style and helps you understand that other country and culture.
4. **And, If You Need help? Just Ask. I'm right here.**
   I have built my career working with corporations and organizations in the development of global leadership programming. I understand the challenges companies face as they begin planning to open new markets and my experience and expertise in developing global strategy and programs are well-known. If you or your department heads need assistance at any point in this journey, just contact me. I am here to help.

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ABOUT MELISSA LAMSON

Melissa Lamson has more than 20 years of experience growing leaders, bridging cultures, and empowering teams. As a sought-after speaker, facilitator, and executive coach, she uses her unique global expertise to help companies and leaders take charge, expand their international business, and achieve real results.

She has offered companies like Space X, SMA Solar, SAP, and LinkedIn the leadership tools and insights to build successful management and project teams in every corner of the world. Melissa develops and teaches leadership skills, including time management, effective feedback, situational leadership, and coaching. She also has a proven track record in Diversity and currently facilitates a popular workshop for women on Networking and Advancement Strategies.

As a thought leader in her industry, Melissa's insight has been featured in The Financial Times, About.com, and Fast Company. She is also a regular columnist for Inc.com. Melissa is a speaker at major international professional conferences and has authored five books, including *#WomenAdvance*, *#BridgingCultures*, *#CulturalTransformation*, *No Such Thing as Small Talk: 7 Keys for Understanding German Business Culture* and *Market Entry into the USA: Why European Companies Fail in the US Market and How to Succeed*. Melissa is currently working on her sixth book, *The New Global Manager: Adapt, Empathize, Win!*

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