

CULTURE AT WORK

The value of intercultural skills in the workplace

www.britishcouncil.org




ABOUT IPSOS

Ipsos is the third largest market research company in the world, with offices in over 85 countries and research coverage in over 140 countries. Ipsos offers unparalleled local knowledge paired with a networked global approach to project management and quality control. Ipsos offers expertise in advertising, customer loyalty, marketing, media and public affairs research, as well as evaluation, forecasting, modelling and consulting. Ipsos has a full line of custom, syndicated, omnibus, panel, and online research products and services, guided by industry experts and bolstered by advanced analytics and methodologies. The company was founded in 1975 and has been publicly traded since 1999. In 2011, Ipsos generated global revenues of approximately €1.4 billion.

ABOUT BOOZ ALLEN HAMILTON

Booz Allen Hamilton has been at the forefront of strategy and technology consulting for nearly a century. Today, the firm provides services to US and international governments in the defence, intelligence and civil sectors, and to major corporations, institutions and not-for-profit organisations. Booz Allen Hamilton offers clients deep functional knowledge spanning strategy and organisation, engineering and operations, technology and analytics – which it combines with specialised expertise in clients' mission and domain areas to help solve their toughest problems. Booz Allen Hamilton has its headquarters in McLean, Virginia, US and employs more than 25,000 people around the world.



CONTENTS

Foreword	2
Executive summary	3
About the research	4
Employers face diverse challenges	5
An increasingly globalised workplace	7
Defining the right skills	9
The business value of intercultural skills	12
Finding employees with the right skills	14
Addressing intercultural skills needs	15
Conclusion	19
Appendix	20

ABOUT THE BRITISH COUNCIL

The British Council creates international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and builds trust between them worldwide. We are a Royal Charter charity, established as the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations.

We work in more than 100 countries, and our 7,000 staff – including 2,000 teachers – work with thousands of professionals and policy makers and millions of young people every year through English, arts, education and society programmes.

We earn over 75 per cent of our annual turnover of £739 million from services which customers pay for, education and development contracts we bid for and from partnerships. A UK Government grant provides the remaining 25 per cent. We match every £1 of core public funding with over £3 earned in pursuit of our charitable purpose.

For more information, please visit: www.britishcouncil.org You can also keep in touch with the British Council through <http://twitter.com/britishcouncil> and <http://blog.britishcouncil.org>

FOREWORD

We are delighted to be writing the foreword for this report which shares results of fascinating new research looking at the value that employers place on intercultural skills.

The increasing competitiveness and interdependencies in the world economy, the pressing need to find effective solutions to global challenges and the interconnectedness offered by the internet and social media pose challenges as well as opportunities to us as citizens, businesses and organisations. Our ability to engage successfully with other countries, organisations and people will depend to a large extent on whether we possess the necessary intercultural and foreign language skills to make fruitful connections, whether in trade and investment, charity/NGO programmes or as government and international organisations. This is fundamentally changing the way in which employers value and seek to develop intercultural skills in the workplace.

More and more business leaders are identifying real business value in employing staff with intercultural skills. These skills are vital, not just in smoothing international business transactions, but also in developing long term relationships with customers and suppliers. Increasingly they also play a key role within the workplace, enhancing team working, fostering creativity, improving communication and reducing conflict. All this translates into greater efficiency, stronger brand identity, enhanced reputation and ultimately impact on the bottom line.

The challenge now for employers, governments, skills providers and employees alike is to better recognise and develop these vital skills – be it learning a foreign language or being open to different outlooks and world views. These skills will be particularly important in the UK and the US at a time when the economies are in need of a shot in the arm from increased international trade and investment. Indeed it is interesting that the research highlights that both countries are behind many of the currently fast growing economies in recognising the importance of developing intercultural skills.

We hope this report will act as a wake-up call for greater recognition of the importance of these skills to the economy and society of the future.



Donald L. Pressley
Senior Vice President
Booz Allen Hamilton



Dr Jo Beall
Director Education and Society
British Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The modern workplace is increasingly globalised and competitive. Communicating with customers, colleagues and partners across international borders is now an everyday occurrence for many workers around the world. Consequently, employers are under strong pressure to find employees who are not only technically proficient, but also culturally astute and able to thrive in a global work environment.

The research shows that there is real business value in employing staff who have the ability to work effectively with individuals and organisations from cultural backgrounds different from their own. In particular, employers highlight the following as important intercultural skills:

- the ability to understand different cultural contexts and viewpoints
- demonstrating respect for others
- knowledge of a foreign language.

Employees with these skills are seen to benefit organisations through their ability to:

- bring in new clients
- work within diverse teams
- support a good brand and reputation for their organisation.

Conversely, employees who lack these skills may leave their organisations susceptible to risks including:

- loss of clients
- damage to reputation
- conflict within teams.

While few employers report actively screening for intercultural skills, they do actively observe candidate behaviour in order to identify attributes closely associated with these skills. Employers look for the following in job candidates:

- demonstrating strong communication skills
- speaking a foreign language
- showing cultural sensitivity.

Most employers report encouraging their staff to develop intercultural skills through in-house training, meetings and events. However, employers also say that educational institutions could do more to equip students with intercultural skills.

The findings suggest that policy makers and education providers could do more to contribute to the development of a workforce with the necessary intercultural skills through interventions, such as prioritising:

- teaching communication skills
- offering foreign language classes
- availability of opportunities for students to gain international experience
- development of international research partnerships.

The research implies that employers would benefit from formalising and improving the ways in which job candidates' intercultural skills are assessed through the recruitment process.

For job seekers the research findings suggest that they must pay attention to the intercultural skills needed by employers. Job seekers would also benefit from presenting evidence of strong communication skills, foreign language abilities and international experiences when competing for jobs.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

As a result of global economic realities, which are driving continuous change in the workplace, employers' needs and expectations are constantly shifting. This means that employers increasingly look for job candidates with skills that go beyond the traditionally defined technical skills and knowledge necessary for a given role.

While formal qualifications and traditional skills remain important, employers say that they are looking for candidates who can navigate a workplace that transcends national and cultural borders, particularly for positions that require interaction with individuals and organisations from nationalities and cultural backgrounds different from their own.

What is perhaps less understood – and the impetus for this research – is the question of why employers value these skills. Which specific skills are they seeking? What do employers define as intercultural skills? What is the business benefit of having employees with intercultural skills, and what are the risks of not having them? Which skills are most valued? How are these skills weighed against the necessary technical skills and formal qualifications?

To answer these questions, and to better understand how intercultural skills are considered, assessed and developed in the modern workplace, the British Council, Booz Allen Hamilton and Ipsos Public Affairs conducted a survey of HR managers at 367 large employers in nine countries: Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Jordan, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US).

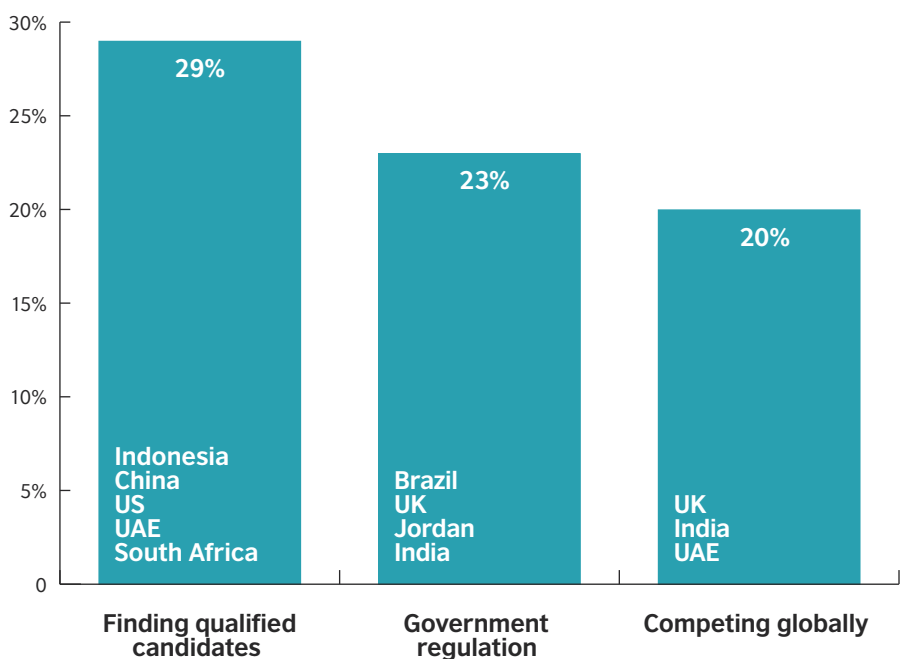


EMPLOYERS FACE DIVERSE CHALLENGES

In addition to economic concerns, employers identify finding appropriately qualified candidates as a top business challenge.

Employers today face a wide range of business challenges. The study began by asking employers about the major business challenges facing their organisations. While economic and market-related challenges were frequently reported by employers, three other key issues rose to the top of challenges reported by employers: finding appropriately qualified candidates, government regulation and competing globally. These findings are displayed in Chart 1, listing the countries for which each challenge is a top concern.

Chart 1: Most pressing business challenges (showing global percentage and top country challenges)



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions. Base: Brazil (n=43), China (n=40), India (n=40), Indonesia (n=40), Jordan (n=40), South Africa (n=40), UAE (n=44), UK (n=40), US (n=40)

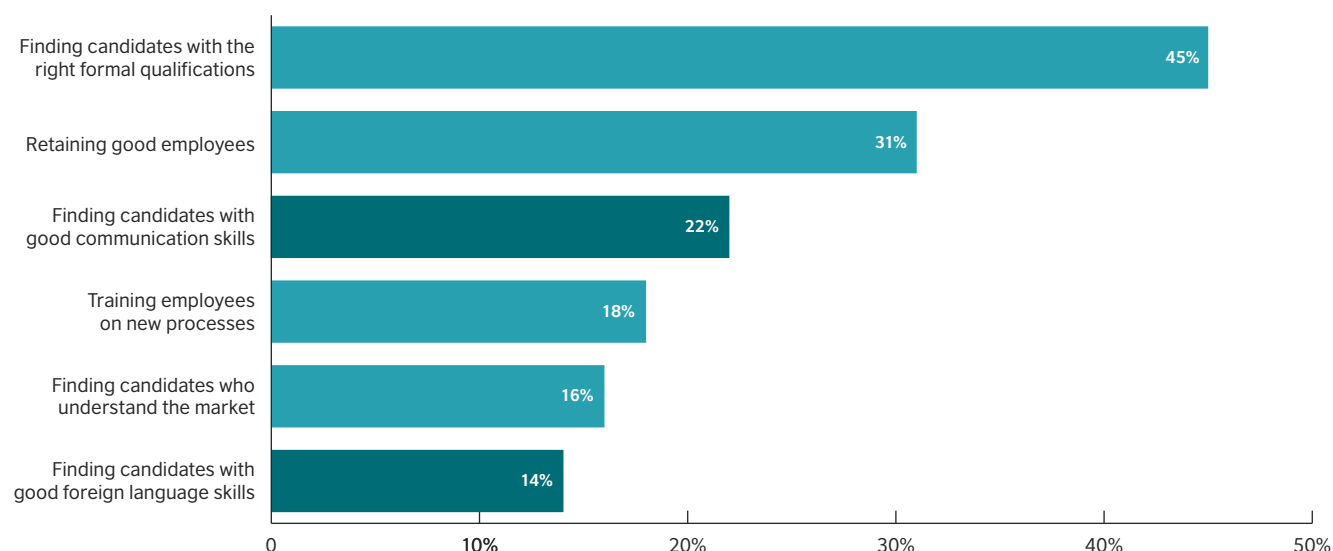
The research also asked employers about the major HR challenges facing their organisation. These results are displayed in Chart 2. The most frequently cited issues are finding candidates with the right formal qualifications and retaining good employees. Employers in India, Brazil, South Africa and the US report the

most problems finding qualified candidates. Retaining employees is also a concern in India and Brazil as well as Jordan, China, the UAE and the UK.

Among the top challenges, employers also mention concerns about finding candidates with good communication and foreign language skills. Nearly a quarter of employers report that finding

candidates with good communication skills is challenging. This is particularly true in India, the UAE, Indonesia and Jordan. Nearly one third of employers in the UAE, Jordan and India also feel that finding candidates with adequate knowledge of foreign languages is a challenge.

Chart 2: Most pressing human resource challenges (showing global percentage of the top HR challenges)



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions. Base: Global (n=367)

AN INCREASINGLY GLOBALISED WORKPLACE

International communication is a central function of today's workplace.

The research shows that employees in most large companies surveyed engage in extensive interaction across international borders. More than two thirds of employers report that their employees engage frequently with colleagues outside of their country, and over half say that their employees engage frequently with partners and clients outside of their country. The private sector engages with partners and clients overseas more frequently

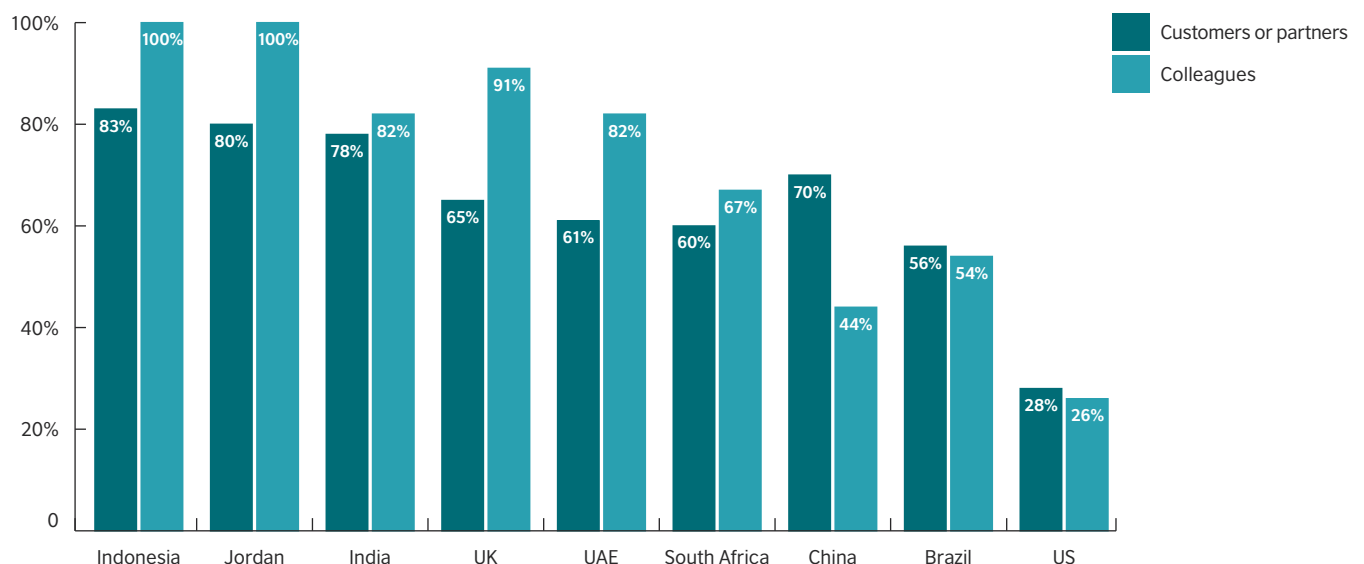
than public and not-for-profit organisations. Chart 3 shows the frequency of international communication by country.

Organisations in India, Jordan and Indonesia have the highest levels of interaction with business partners and suppliers overseas. Other countries – with the exception of the US – also report frequent interaction with partners and suppliers outside of their country. The pattern is similar for customer interactions. India and Jordan have the highest level

of overseas customer interactions, while the US has the lowest, with just one in five organisations reporting frequent interactions with customers overseas.

Employers in most countries also report a great deal of interaction with colleagues overseas. Nearly all employers in Indonesia and Jordan report that their employees interact frequently with colleagues overseas. Ninety per cent of UK employers and four in five employers in the UAE

Chart 3: Frequency of employee interaction with customers and partners or colleagues overseas (showing type of interaction by country in percent)



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions.
Base: Brazil (n=43), China (n=40), India (n=40), Indonesia (n=40), Jordan (n=40), South Africa (n=40), UAE (n=44), UK (n=40), US (n=40)

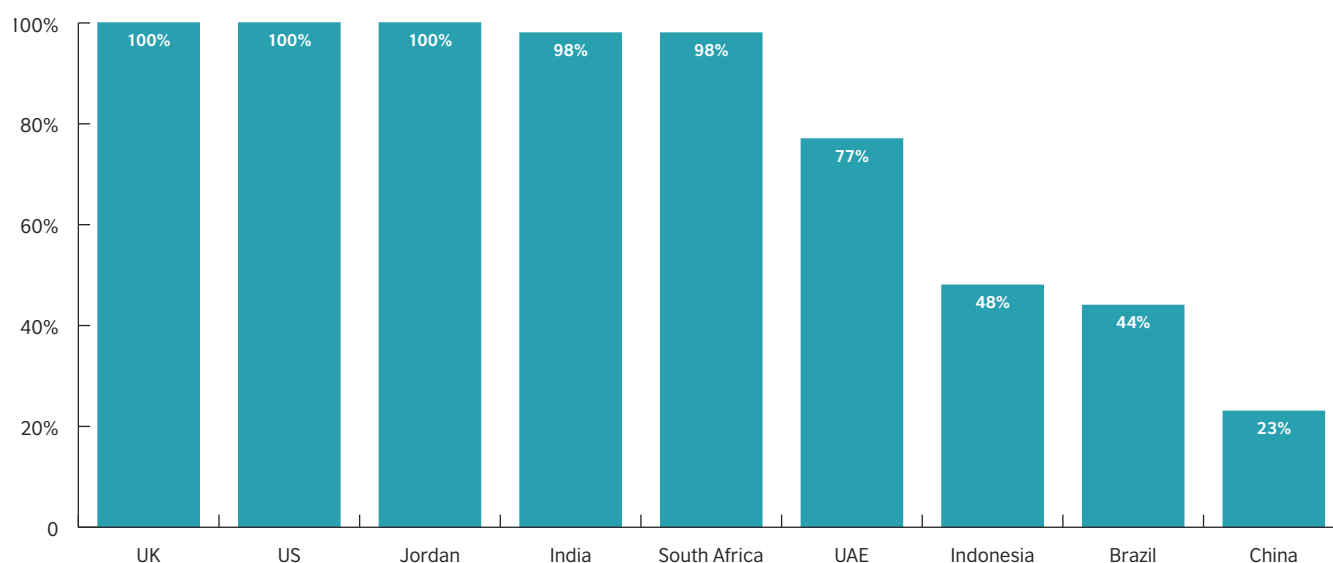
and India also report similar levels of overseas interaction with colleagues. However, just over a quarter of US employers report that their employees interact frequently with colleagues overseas.

The data suggests that English is positioned as the day-to-day language of business in most of the countries surveyed. More than three quarters of the organisations surveyed report that English is in everyday use in their

organisation. This is highest in the private sector, closely followed by the not-for-profit sector and by the public sector. In addition to the countries where English is the predominant language, all of Jordan's employers report the use of English day-to-day. Chinese employers are the least likely to use English day-to-day, with less than a quarter reporting doing so. Chart 4 shows the percentages of English spoken regularly in the workplace by country.

Although English is the predominant language spoken in the US, a quarter of employers say that Spanish is also commonly spoken day-to-day. In India and South Africa, where English is recognised as a national language, local languages are also spoken regularly in the workplace (93 per cent and 38 per cent respectively). Local languages are also spoken in addition to English in nearly all organisations surveyed in Brazil, China, Indonesia, Jordan and the UAE.

Chart 4: Percentage of organisations where English is spoken daily (showing percentage by country)



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions.
Base: Brazil (n=43), China (n=40), India (n=40), Indonesia (n=40), Jordan (n=40), South Africa (n=40), UAE (n=44), UK (n=40), US (n=40)

DEFINING THE RIGHT SKILLS

Employers believe that intercultural skills are integral to the workplace.

When asked how important intercultural skills are to their organisation, almost all employers responded they were very or fairly important. Chart 5 shows the value employers place on intercultural skills in the workplace by country.

The research shows that employers frequently define intercultural skills as 'the ability to understand different cultural contexts and viewpoints'. Demonstrating respect for others is another key quality mentioned, followed by accepting different cultural contexts and viewpoints and openness to new ideas and ways of thinking.

Chart 6 (see page 10) shows the terms most frequently used by employers to

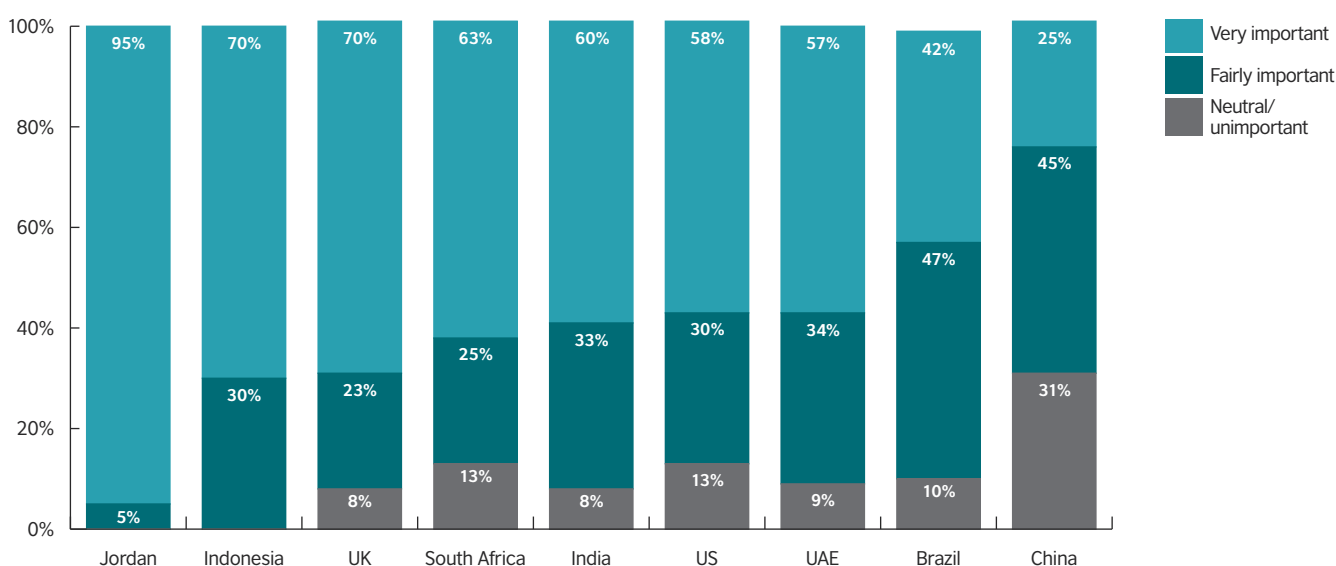
define intercultural skills; the term most used by employers to define intercultural skills appears in the largest box and the term least used in the smallest box.

In comparing the requirement for intercultural skills among different types of employees, employees in client-facing roles tend to require intercultural skills more than non-client-facing employees. Additionally, employers in the private sector place more value on intercultural skills for client-facing roles (64 per cent) than public sector and NGO employers (40 per cent and 46 per cent, respectively), who generally have a stronger recognition of the benefits of these skills for internationally-facing roles.

Employers were asked to prioritise intercultural skills, more general soft skills and technical skills against each other. This exercise was done to gauge how employers perceive the relative value of these skills with regards to the needs of their organisation. The results of this exercise are shown in Chart 7 (see page 11).

By far the most highly valued skill is demonstrating respect for others, followed by working effectively in diverse teams. These skills rank narrowly above qualifications related to the job and expertise in the field. The most prioritised skills in this exercise also correlate with the top three intercultural skills valued by employers.

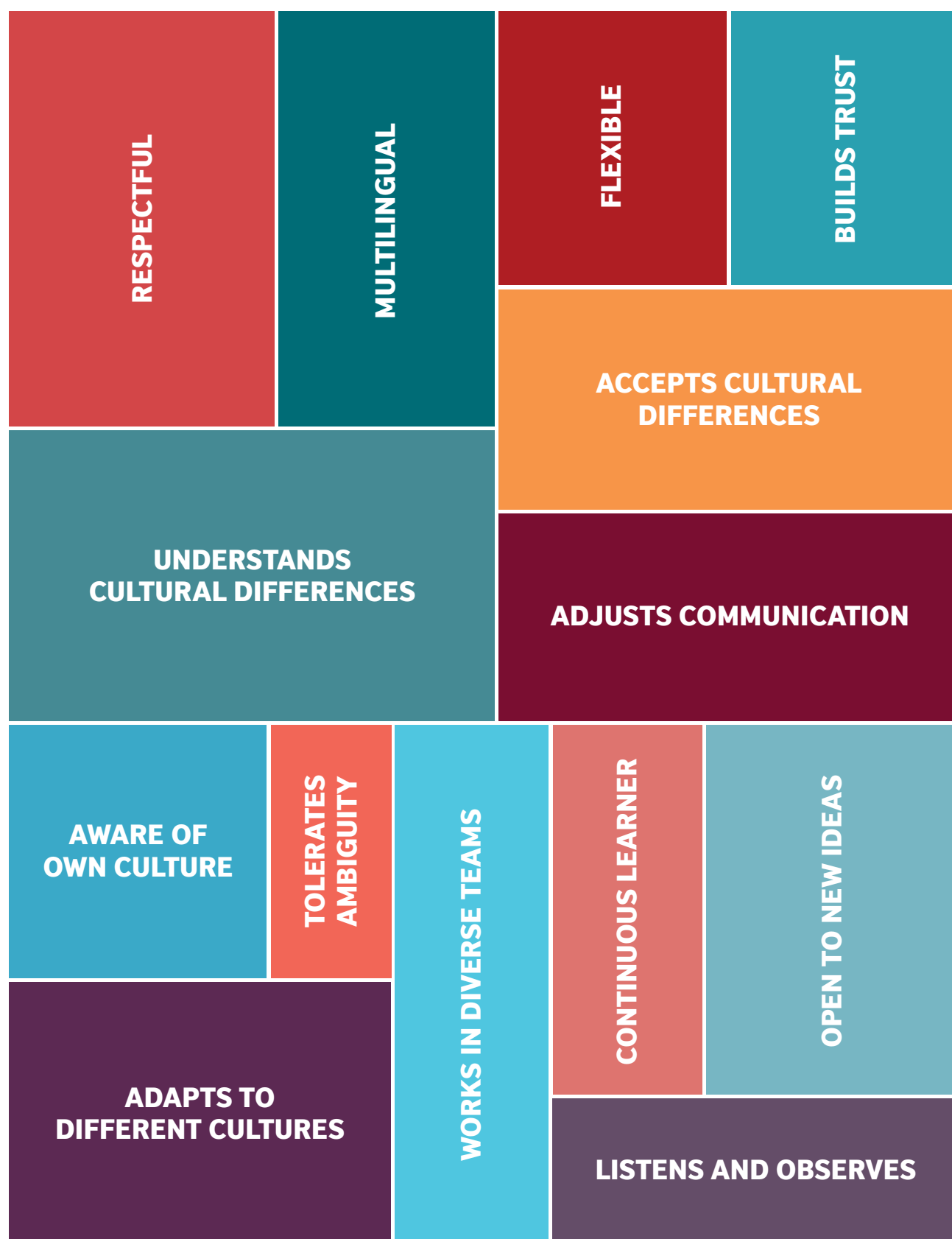
Chart 5: The importance of intercultural skills to organisations (by country, ranked by very important)



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions. Base: Brazil (n=43), China (n=40), India (n=40), Indonesia (n=40), Jordan (n=40), South Africa (n=40), UAE (n=44), UK (n=40), US (n=40)

Note: Because of rounding and/or exclusion of 'don't know' responses, percentages may not add up to 100%.

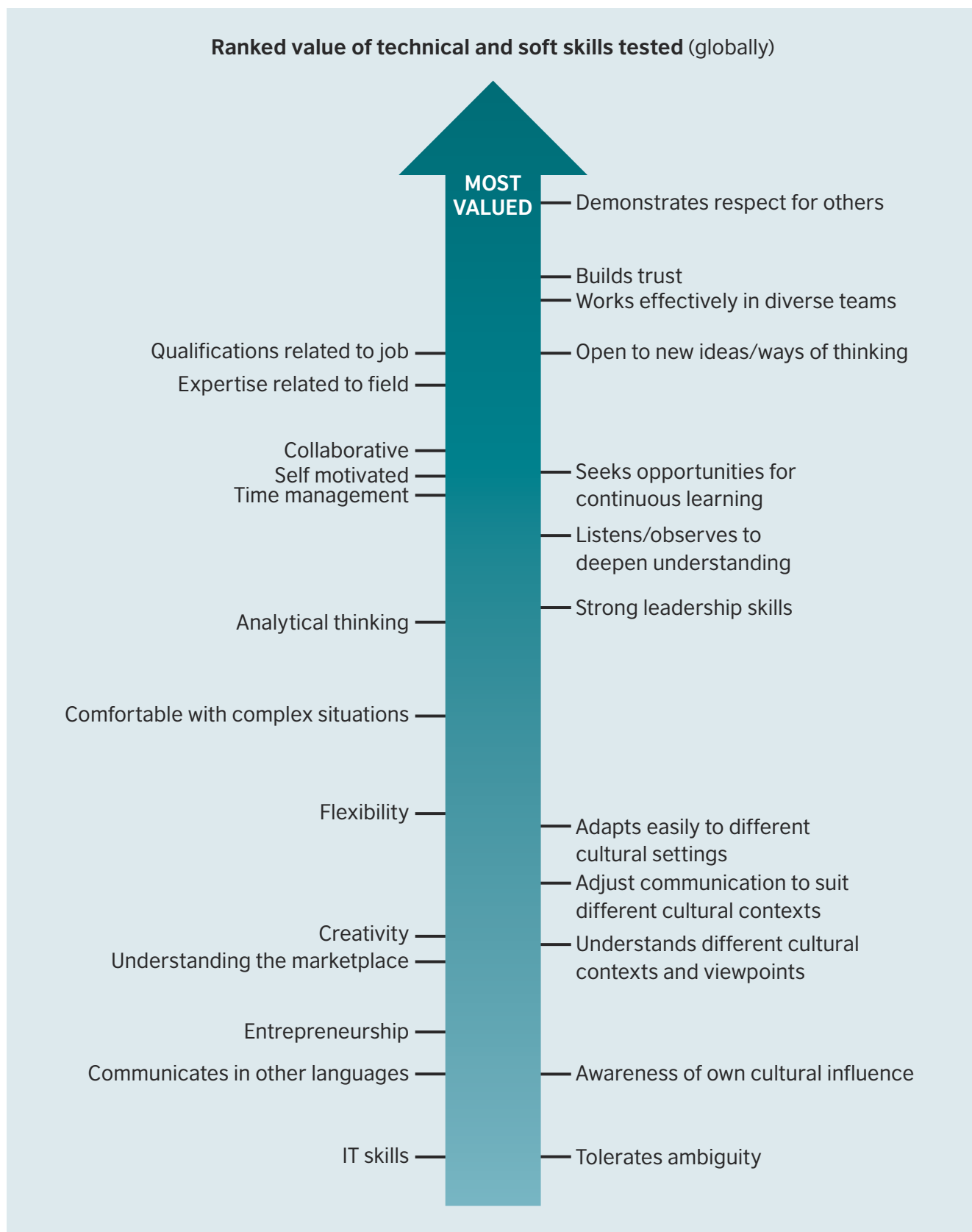
Chart 6: The terms employers use to define intercultural skills



Note: The term most used by employers to define intercultural skills appears in the largest box and the term least used in the smallest box.

Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions. Base: Ipsos Public Affairs, 2012: Global (n=367).

Chart 7: How employers rank different skills in terms of importance



Note: Respondents were given multiple sets of skills and asked to indicate the most and least important skills within each set. Results show the relative ranking of skills after each skill's relative importance was calculated using a MaxDiff analysis.

Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions. Base: Ipsos Public Affairs, 2012: Global (n=367).

THE BUSINESS VALUE OF INTERCULTURAL SKILLS

Intercultural skills provide business value and help mitigate risk.

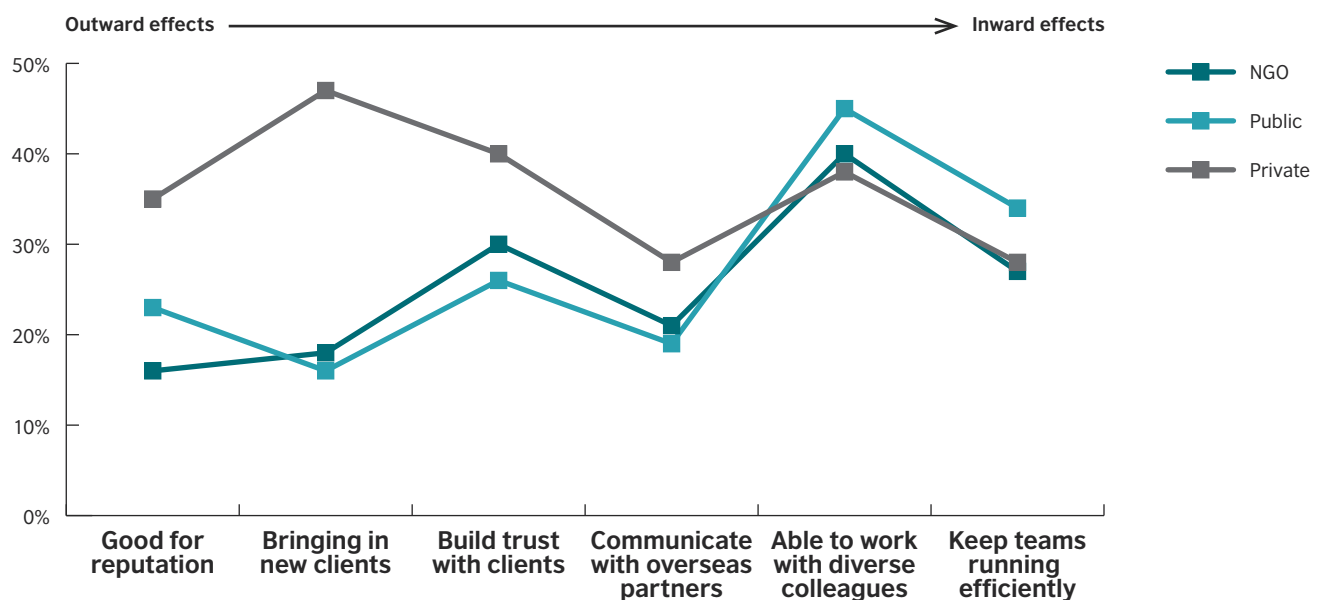
The research shows that HR managers associate intercultural skills with significant business benefits. Overall, the organisations surveyed are most interested in intercultural skills for the benefit they bring to keeping teams running efficiently. Other significant benefits are seen as building trust with clients and developing relationships with new clients. These benefits also carry significant monetary value to employers.

Private sector employers cite bringing in new clients, building trust and relationships with new clients and reputation-building as the most positive business benefits of employees possessing intercultural skills. Chart 8 shows the business value of intercultural skills by sector.

Employers in the UAE, India and Brazil are more likely than employers in other countries to consider ability to work with a diverse set of colleagues as a benefit

of intercultural skills. Organisations in Jordan identify the most significant benefit of having employees with intercultural skills as the positive impact on brand and reputation. Employers in the UAE see the value of these skills in terms of efficiency and winning new clients.

Chart 8: The business benefits of employees having intercultural skills (showing top benefits by sector)



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions.
Base: Private (n=198), Public (n=86), NGO (n=83)

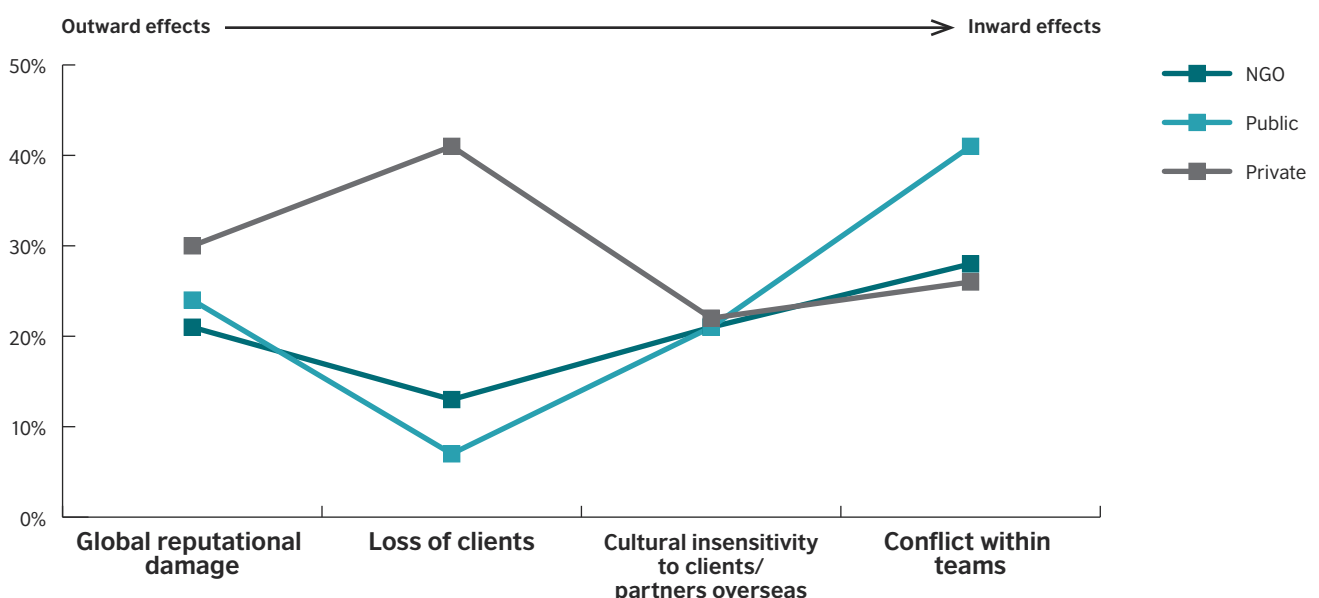
The research suggests that while organisations in South Africa and the US are generally less likely to identify significant business value in having employees with intercultural skills, one in five employers identifies team efficiency and workplace harmony as benefits. UK employers are also less likely than those in many other countries to recognise the benefits of intercultural skills. However, nearly half of UK employers think that these skills help build trust and relationships with clients.

Employers also see significant risk to their organisations when employees lack intercultural skills. Approximately one third of employers see organisational risks such as miscommunication and conflict within teams as top risks. More than a quarter of organisations surveyed are concerned about a loss of clients and damage to brand and reputation. Roughly one in five organisations is also concerned about cultural insensitivity and project mistakes. Chart 9 shows employers' perceptions of the business

risks of not having intercultural skills in the workplace.

Private sector organisations are much more likely than their public sector counterparts to cite loss of clients and sales as risks. One in four employers in the public sector considers themselves more susceptible to mistakes when employees do not possess intercultural skills.

Chart 9: The business risks associated with not having employees with intercultural skills (showing top risks by sector)



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions.
Base: Private (n=198), Public (n=86), NGO (n=83)

FINDING EMPLOYEES WITH THE RIGHT SKILLS

While employers value intercultural skills, they do not often screen for them in the recruitment process.

In addition to the business benefits of intercultural skills, the research shows that employers perceive staff members with intercultural skills to be at an advantage within the organisation. Employees who possess intercultural skills are at a greater advantage than their colleagues in a number of areas, such as increased visibility within their organisation. Other top personal benefits perceived globally by employers include faster promotion and greater project variety.

Employer responses also indicate that employers perceive the individual strengths of a staff member's intercultural skills differently by type of role. The research suggests a perception that employees in externally facing roles display intercultural skills more strongly than those in internally facing roles. The importance of foreign language skills is also greater for those with external roles (56 per cent versus 36 per cent).

While employers value intercultural skills and can identify both the business and personal benefits of these skills in the workplace, they do not often screen for them in the recruitment process. In fact, less than half of employers surveyed globally feel that their recruiting process sufficiently screens for these skills. There was a notable exception to this pattern in Jordan, India and the UAE where employers feel more confident in their screening and recruiting for intercultural skills.

Even upon interviewing candidates, just over a third of employers report actively screening for intercultural skills. Chart 10 shows a comparison between how frequently employers screen for intercultural skills in the interview process and how often prospective employees display those skills.

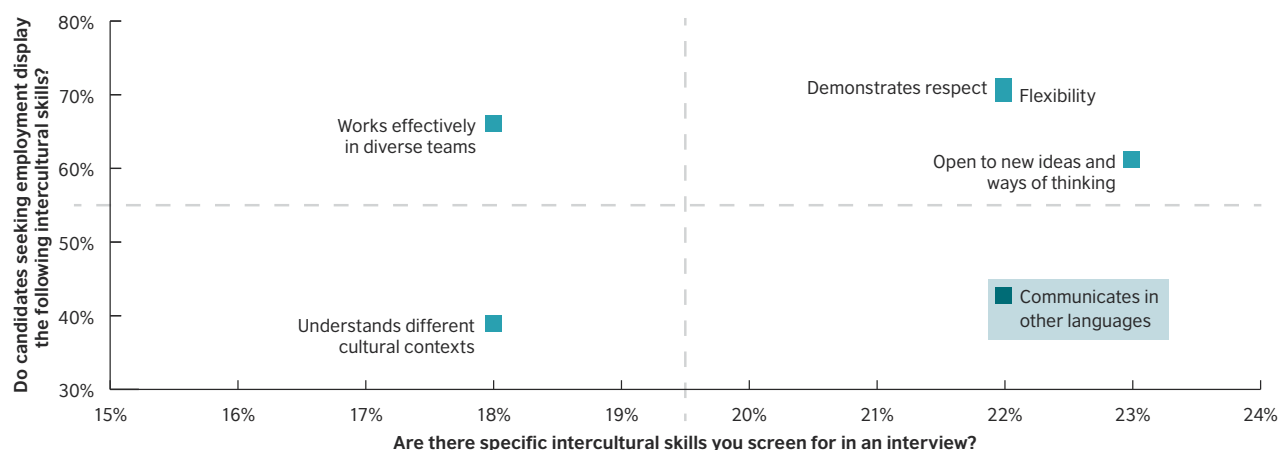
Employers also find it difficult to find good communication and foreign language skills in their employees. Yet, less than a

quarter of employers screen for these two skills in the application process.

Although many employers do not actively screen for certain intercultural skills, they do see international experiences – such as study abroad, internships abroad or international work experience – as indicators of intercultural skills. This is especially true in China and Indonesia where employers see a strong connection between international study or work experience and the intercultural skills they value in the workplace.

The research also suggests that employers observe other indicators in candidates that they associate closely with intercultural skills. This includes the way candidates conduct themselves during the selection process – such as demonstrating strong communication skills (37 per cent), speaking in a foreign language (33 per cent), or exhibiting cultural sensitivity (27 per cent).

Chart 10: Percentage skills employers screen for by percentage skills displayed by candidates (showing only top skills screened for)



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions.
Base: Global (n=333, for 'displayed by candidates'; n=173, for 'employers screened for')

ADDRESSING INTERCULTURAL SKILLS NEEDS

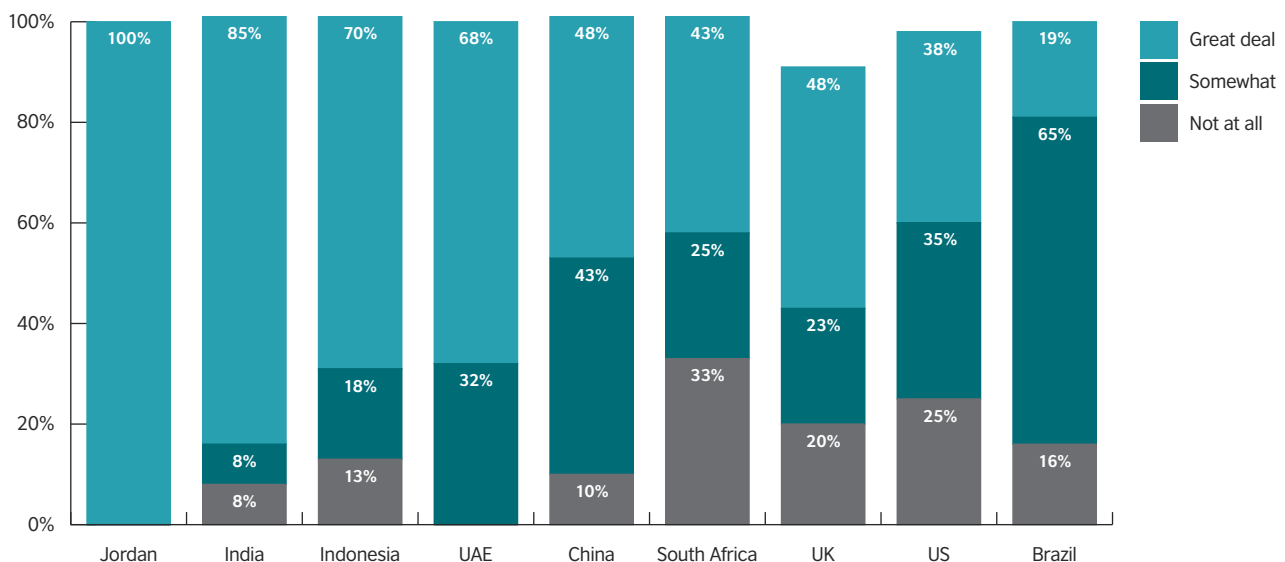
Education has a role to play in providing students with opportunities to develop intercultural skills.

More than half of employers surveyed report that they encourage staff to develop intercultural skills. This figure is much lower than the number of organisations surveyed that place value on intercultural skills in the workplace, but in line with the responses of employers that screen for intercultural skills in the recruitment process. Chart 11 shows employer responses to the question of offering support to develop intercultural skills.

The development of intercultural skills is most strongly supported in Jordan, India and Indonesia. In the US and South Africa, however, a third and a quarter of organisations respectively report that they do not encourage employees to develop intercultural skills. Employers in Brazil are most neutral on this issue with nearly two thirds of employers neither encouraging nor discouraging the development of intercultural skills in the workplace.

When asked how the education provision in their home country was supporting their organisations' needs for intercultural skills in the workplace, just over a third of employers report being satisfied. More than one quarter of employers globally see the education provision in their country as inadequate in producing graduates that meet the intercultural skills needs of their organisation.

Chart 11: Percentage of employers that encourage the development of intercultural skills (by country, ranked by 'great deal')



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions.
Base: Brazil (n=43), China (n=40), India (n=40), Indonesia (n=40), Jordan (n=40), South Africa (n=40), UAE (n=44), UK (n=40), US (n=40)
Note: Because of rounding and/or exclusion of 'don't know' responses, percentages may not add up to 100%.

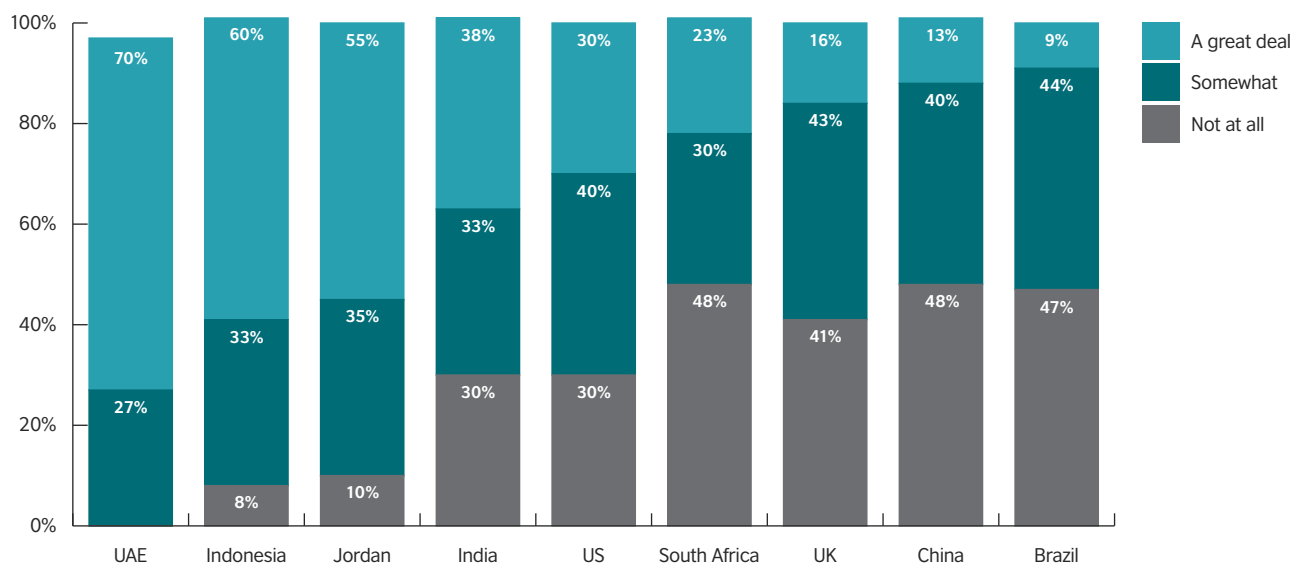
The perception of education varies greatly when looking at responses by country. Employers in Indonesia, Jordan and the UAE report being most satisfied with their country's education systems in meeting the intercultural skills needs of their organisations. However, nearly half of employers in Brazil, China and South Africa were not satisfied with the ability of their education system to produce graduates with the intercultural skills needed.

Employer responses in India and the US are almost evenly divided, with a third of employers reporting being satisfied with their country's education provision, a third of employers reporting dissatisfaction and the remaining third remaining neutral on the issue. Nearly half of employers in the UK were neutral on this issue.

Chart 12 shows how employers responded when asked if the education provision in their country meets the intercultural skills needs of their organisation.

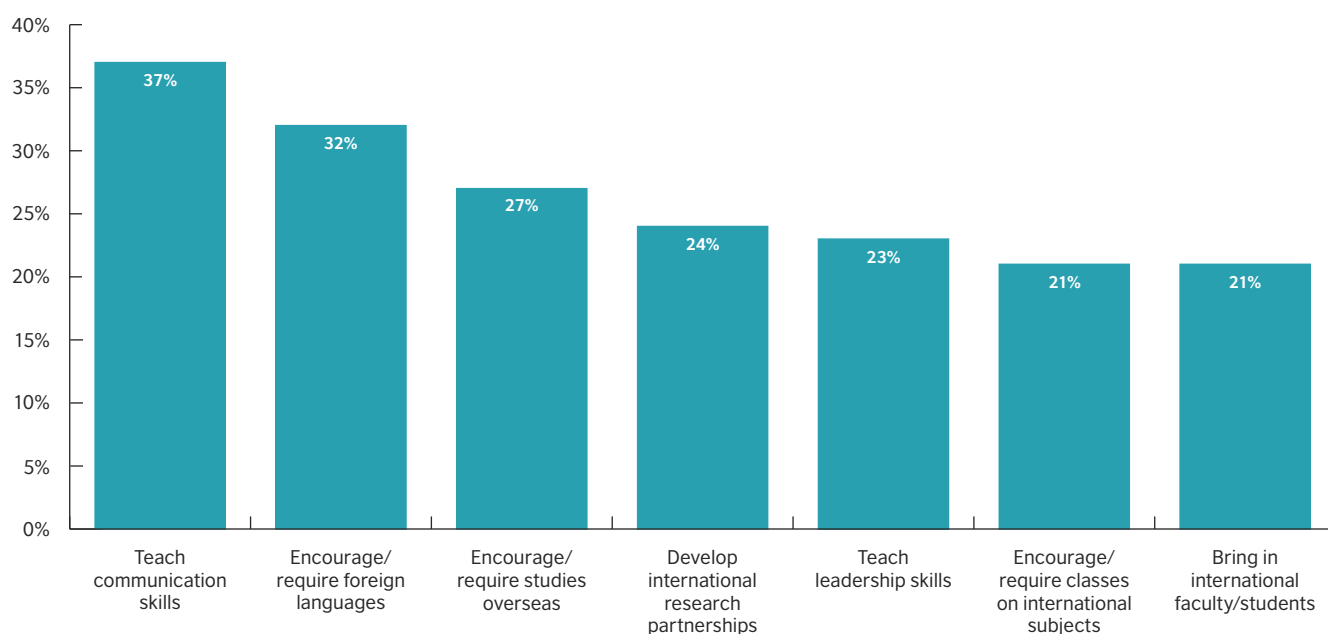
This demonstrates that there is significant opportunity to strengthen the role education plays in the development of intercultural skills. This is particularly the case in high-growth economies where there is pressure to stay competitive on a global scale. Chart 13 shows the top employer recommendations to education systems for improving the development of intercultural skills.

Chart 12: Percentage of employers who believe the education system meets their intercultural skills needs (by country, ranked by 'great deal')



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions.
 Base: Brazil (n=43), China (n=40), India (n=40), Indonesia (n=40), Jordan (n=40), South Africa (n=40), UAE (n=44), UK (n=40), US (n=40)
 Note: Because of rounding and/or exclusion of 'don't know' responses, percentages may not add up to 100%.

Chart 13: Contributions that education can make to improving intercultural skills as seen by employers (top eight suggestions from employers)



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions. Base: Global (n=367)

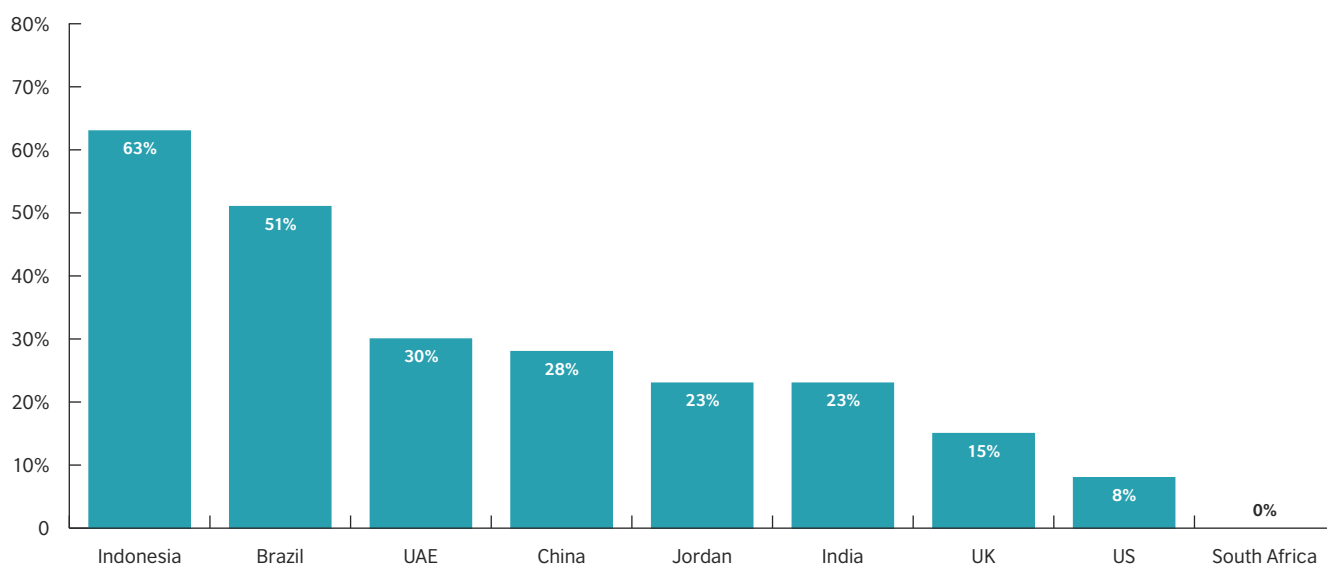


On the whole, employers say that education institutions could do more to provide students with opportunities to develop intercultural skills. More than one third of employers recommend strengthening the teaching of communication skills, and a quarter of organisations suggested encouraging more foreign language programmes, developing international research partnerships and increasing opportunities for overseas study.

Employers in India, Jordan and the UAE believe that their country's education system should focus on improving the teaching of communications and leadership skills. Increasing foreign language education is a priority for employers in Brazil, India, Indonesia, Jordan and the UAE. Employers in Brazil, India, Indonesia and the UAE also recommend developing more international research partnerships. Providing greater opportunities for

study abroad is the top recommendation in Brazil and Indonesia and one of the top four suggestions by employers in China. Chart 14 shows the level of support for increasing opportunities for students to study overseas by country.

Chart 14: Percentage of employers who believe study abroad should be encouraged to improve intercultural skills



Source: Telephone/face-to-face surveys of public sector, private sector and NGO employers responsible for employment decisions.
Base: Brazil (n=43), China (n=40), India (n=40), Indonesia (n=40), Jordan (n=40), South Africa (n=40), UAE (n=44), UK (n=40), US (n=40)

CONCLUSION

Employers around the world face a wide range of business challenges.

A common challenge shared by employers around the world is finding employees with adequate intercultural skills. Given that the operating environments of all organisations is increasingly global, it comes as no surprise that employers need employees who can understand and adapt to different cultural contexts.

Employers place a high value on intercultural skills in the workplace and associate having workers with strong intercultural skills with business benefits, such as increased productivity and sales. They also associate a lack of intercultural skills with business risks, such as miscommunication and team conflict.

While employers universally value intercultural skills, they do not often assess these skills in the application or interview process. This lack of skills assessment in the recruitment process may indicate that HR recruitment processes and staff are not always aligned with the needs of the teams that interact internationally. This also implies that employers could benefit from improving their ability to identify and assess intercultural skills in prospective employees.

Employers also generally feel that education systems in their countries could do more to provide students

with intercultural skills. To mitigate the risk of having a workforce that is unprepared for the global work environment, employers often provide training for their employees to develop intercultural skills.

This research suggests that there is significant opportunity for employers, policy makers and education providers to work together to strengthen the development of intercultural skills to meet the needs of an increasingly global workforce.

EMPLOYERS	JOB SEEKERS	POLICY MAKERS/ EDUCATION PROVIDERS
<p>Employers understand the value of intercultural skills to their businesses. In fact, they value these skills above many technical abilities and formal qualifications.</p> <p>The value of intercultural skills manifests itself in teams running efficiently, bringing in new clients, building trust and improving brand reputation.</p> <p>Employers also see significant risks in their employees lacking in intercultural skills. Without these skills, they fear conflict within teams, loss of clients/sales, damage to reputation and brand, and cultural insensitivity. When employees lack intercultural skills, employers risk miscommunication between teams and team conflict.</p> <p>To maximise business potential and minimise risk, employers would benefit from improving the ways in which they identify candidates with these skills in the recruitment process.</p>	<p>Employers strongly value intercultural skills such as demonstrating respect, building trust and being open to new ideas. In fact, the research suggests that employers value these skills over job-specific qualifications and expertise in the field. To best position themselves for employment, job seekers should present intercultural skills alongside their formal qualifications.</p> <p>As there is often no formal assessment for intercultural skills by employers, it is up to job candidates to demonstrate these skills in the application and interview process.</p> <p>Top indicators of intercultural skills for employers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • international experiences (study abroad, internships abroad or international work experience) • strong communication skills • foreign language skills • cultural sensitivity. 	<p>Few employers report being satisfied with their national education system's ability to produce graduates with strong intercultural skills.</p> <p>While there are variations across countries, the research suggests that there is significant opportunity to strengthen the role education plays in the development of intercultural skills in the future workforce.</p> <p>Regardless of how employers feel about the education system in meeting their skills needs, employers have suggestions for how to improve the development of intercultural skills. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paying greater attention to the teaching of communication skills • encouraging foreign language programmes • increasing opportunities for international study • developing international research partnerships.

APPENDIX

Research methodology

This survey was conducted with large private, public and NGO/charity sector employers in Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Jordan, South Africa, the UAE, the UK and the US. In total, 198 private sector, 86 public sector and 83 NGO/charity sector employers took part.

Details of the research methodology in each country can be found in the table below.

The individuals who participated were identified as being responsible for strategic decision-making with regard to employment within their organisation. Specifically, this means they:

- take a lead role in developing and executing a recruitment and talent-management strategy for their organisation

- are heavily involved in developing and executing a recruitment and talent-management strategy for their organisation.

The fieldwork was carried out by Ipsos Public Affairs between October and December 2012.

COUNTRY	SAMPLE (BY ORGANISATION TYPE)	DEFINITION OF A 'LARGE' EMPLOYER	INTERVIEW METHOD
Brazil	20 private 11 public 12 NGO/charity	1,000 largest Brazilian companies	Phone
China	20 private 10 public 10 NGO/charity	200+ employees	Phone
India	22 private 9 public 9 NGO/charity	200+ employees	Face-to-face
Indonesia	20 private 10 public 10 NGO/charity	200+ employees	Face-to-face
Jordan	31 private 4 public 5 NGO/charity	200+ employees	Face-to-face
South Africa	20 private 10 public 10 NGO/charity	R25,000,000 yearly revenue or 250+ employees	Phone
UAE	25 private 12 public 7 NGO/charity	1,000,000AED yearly revenue or 200+ employees	Face-to-face
UK	20 private 10 public 10 NGO/charity	£30 million per year or 250+ employees	Phone
US	20 private 10 public 10 NGO/charity	\$14 million per year or 500+ employees	Phone



PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

Front cover © iStockphoto

Page 2 (Donald L. Pressley) © Booz Allen Hamilton

Page 4 © Mat Wright

Page 17 © Mat Wright

Inside back cover © Mat Wright

