

COLUMN

Do we understand each other?



Do we understand each other's language and culture when doing business?

This was the topic of the Round Table I initiated, of which you can read the article in this magazine.

My colleagues from the International Programme often deal with this topic here in Brainport Eindhoven. When doing business, do you understand each other enough to reach the desired result for both parties? And to what extent does the culture of doing business in your country fit in with doing business in Brainport Eindhoven?

Under the inspiring leadership of Michiel Roelofs, student at the Tu/e and co-founder of a start-up, these questions were put to Jeff Shih VP Global Services Advantech from Taiwan, Jessica Smarsch Head of Design Smarsch USA, Peter Simkens Managing Director DSP Valley Belgium, Jeroen Wijering Co-founder JW Player USA and Pieter Noordzij plus Johann van Beelen two area managers of Brainport Development.

In the lead up to this session, Vincent Merk of the Tu/e, specialist in intercultural management and communication, was asked to help with the preparations. The group of people present were asked several questions via a Data DJ to break the ice. And it comes as no surprise that the bitterbal was dubbed as the favourite Dutch snack.

It really helps that organisations like the Dutch Foreign Investment Agency, the BOM or Brainport are helping to understand each other's wishes and making a 'soft landing' possible in the Netherlands. The presence of large companies like Philips, NXP, VDL and DAF have given Eindhoven a relevant technological image. The fact that the residents of Eindhoven have tech in their own DNA means that they are open for innovation, which in turn makes the city an interesting place to roll out projects and stimulate the presence of talent. The opportunity to visit easily accessible events such as the Dutch Design Week and Glow make it a more attractive living and working environment.

The open structure of the city makes a few guests so enthusiastic that they have decided to open the doors of their own businesses so that others can also use (for free) the technology they have developed, join their global network and share the expertise of doing business internationally.

The Netherlands is a small country and Eindhoven is not a city of the world. Brainport helps establish connections. Yet it is still difficult to find each other within the local network. The guests suggest using an open system to provide more insight into each other's business activities and needs and as such to dissolve borders. In English, of course.

I wish you a good summer and an understandable holiday, also in your home city! ■

Fancy van de Vorst

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