

PLAYING “NICE”

While it always did look good on paper, and spreadsheets, Marco’s strategy for the Netherlands was never a certainty. Indeed, it was more an article of faith, but, to his delight and to everyone else’s pleasant surprise, it was really starting to pay dividends. Soon it would be able to ‘stand on its own two feet’ without much help from him.

Early on, he saw the potential of these strategic moves and was convinced of the promise of success, so by the time the radical new strategy with the sexy new products was gaining momentum, he was starting to get a bit bored. As an **ENTP**, he was a classical ‘entrepreneur’ personality and was now looking for his next adventure. But he was not your typical ENTP – he had the strong flavor of structure and methodology in how he did things. His statements were often normative with lots of ‘shoulds’ and ‘musts’ and ‘no other options’ – that kind of thing. Very often, he was right.

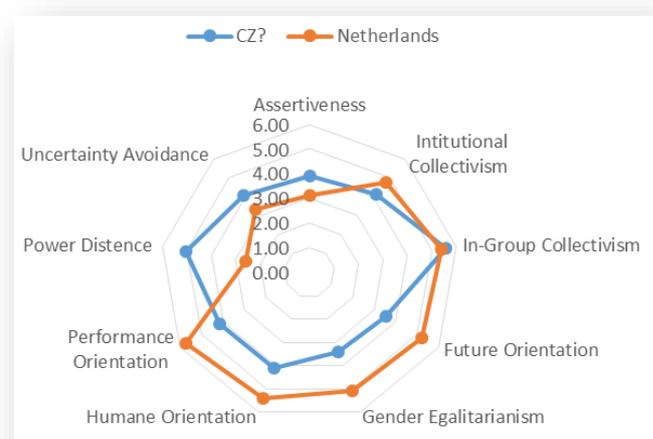
If you were prepared to see his logic, you and Marco could get along well. If you had another perspective, but not the skill or the knowledge to back it up, he would eat you alive. Most people forgave him this indiscretion because, more often than not, he did seem to be right and had done the work to prove it. By all accounts, he was a success, and he was a passionate and motivating figure.

There were yet years of tweaking, and problem-solving and challenges to tackle in the implementation of his strategy, but this rising star was already looking to take on his next assignment. Torn between his responsibility toward implementing his current strategy and the need to do something new and different, he accepted the offer from the CEO to work 50% on the Netherlands and 50% as internal quality consultant for the Czech operations. (Below: Czech Practices vs. Dutch Values)

Things started off well, with some predictable misunderstandings, until a new manager arrived. It then became a disaster. Marco as a country manager was used to getting his way by virtue of his position, his infectious enthusiasm, and his superior and convincing knowledge. The new Czech manager seemed impervious to Marco’s logic and downright unwilling to cooperate. Marco complained of him being “untrustworthy”, “duplicitous”, and “inept”. After a few weeks, progress seemed not only to stagnate, but to deteriorate and then reverse!

In a group meeting with the CEO, it was made clear to the new manager that Marco was not only an internal quality consultant tasked with bringing the operations up to the corporate standards, but was also the senior manager and should be accorded that respect.

It seemed to have no effect.



Assignment: using the concepts from the course, analyze the situation and present some actionable advice to Marco.