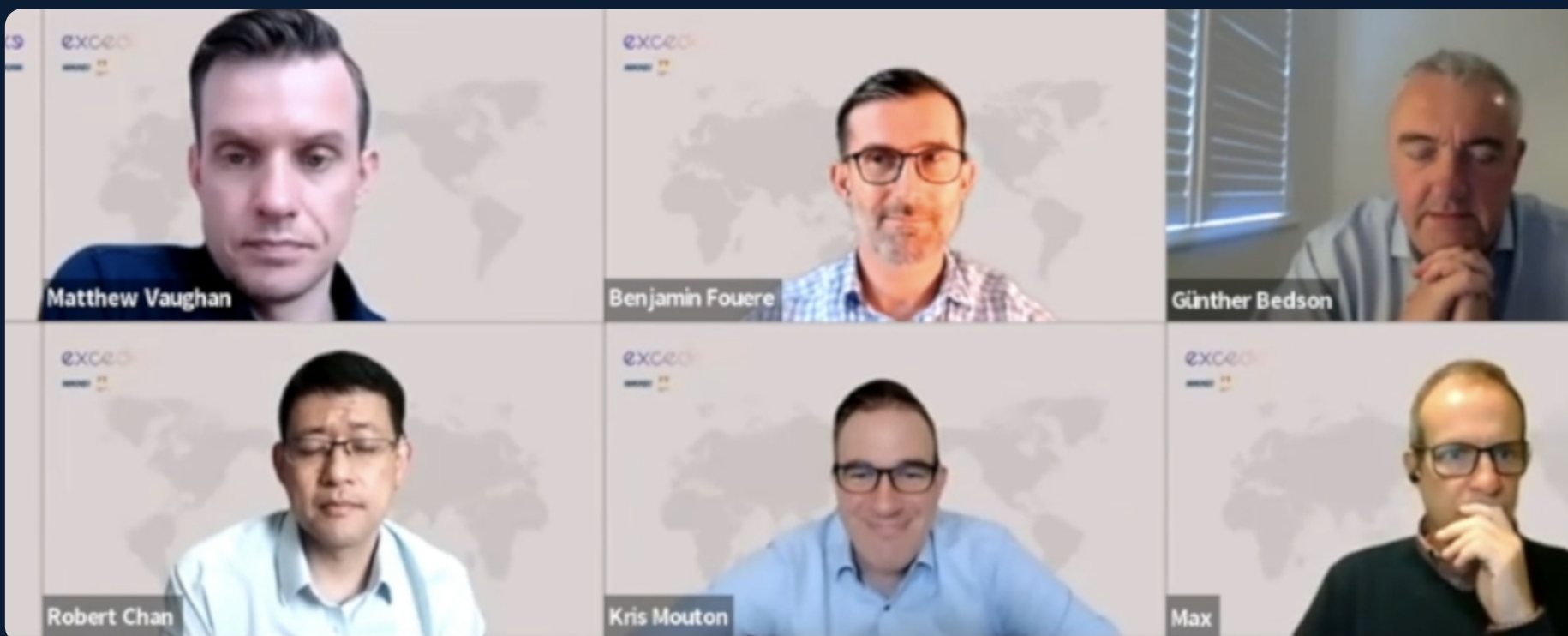


SELECTED PRIOR ENGAGEMENT

FINANCIAL TIMES / NIKKEI

Working with India

Helping an international business coaching team interpret Indian business practices from their own cultural positions—and in relation to Japanese business expectations.



PROVENANCE

Designed and delivered by Malcolm McCluskey for the Financial Times / Nikkei business coaching team, before the founding of Global SIM Labs.

THE BUSINESS QUESTION

India was not the only culture in the room.

Business coaches from different cultural backgrounds were supporting professionals working across Japan and India. To interpret Indian business practices effectively, they needed to consider not only India, but how their own assumptions and Japanese business expectations shaped what appeared direct, emotional, hierarchical, trustworthy or negotiable.

WHAT WAS ALREADY STRONG

International coaching experience

Knowledge of Japanese business

Cross-cultural exposure

Professional coaching capability

WHAT NEEDED TO BECOME VISIBLE

The position of the observer

Each coach's own cultural reference point

India's position relative to Japanese expectations

How the meaning of behaviour changed across the comparison

The task was not to learn a formula for India. It was to recognise the positions from which India was being interpreted.

THE ENGAGEMENT

Three cultural positions. One live business test.

The 60-minute seminar moved deliberately from perspective to practice. Participants first considered their own cultural assumptions, then examined Indian business practices in relation to Japanese expectations, before testing the implications through the real-life pressure of negotiation.

01 LOCATE THE OBSERVER

Recognise how each coach's own cultural position shaped what appeared normal, effective or unusual.

02 READ INDIA IN CONTEXT

Explore expectations around communication, trust, relationships, hierarchy, decision-making and time.

03 COMPARE WITHOUT REDUCING

Examine how Indian and Japanese business expectations could differ without turning either into a fixed formula.

04 TEST IT THROUGH NEGOTIATION

Apply the comparison to emotion, information, influence, pressure and the movement towards agreement.

Negotiation made the comparison consequential: what appeared emotional, indirect, flexible or final could change with the position from which it was interpreted.

THE PARTICIPANT PERSPECTIVE

The room became part of the case.

As the seminar moved into negotiation, participants tested the cultural comparisons against their own professional experience. The discussion showed how differently the same behaviour could be interpreted depending on the observer, the relationship and the business context.

01 PERSPECTIVE BECAME VISIBLE

Participants considered how their own communication norms influenced what they noticed, trusted or questioned.

02 COMPARISON BECAME PRACTICAL

Experience of Japanese and Indian business environments brought abstract cultural differences into recognisable working situations.

03 INTERPRETATION CHANGED THE QUESTION

The discussion moved beyond whether a behaviour was right or wrong towards what it might mean—and how an effective response could be produced.

The value was not agreement on a cultural formula. It was a more disciplined way to question the first interpretation.

FROM PRIOR ENGAGEMENT TO GSL

The seminar ended. The need did not.

Knowledge about India does not automatically become effective performance with Indian colleagues, clients or partners.

People may understand cultural patterns and possess considerable international experience—yet still misread what has been agreed, who can decide, whether a concern has been raised or what a commitment actually means.

The seminar anticipated the challenge now addressed through Global SIM Labs’ Working with India services:

- Live 90-minute organisational briefings
- Extended India workshops
- Bespoke organisational programmes

READ THE SITUATION.

CHECK THE MEANING.

RESPOND TO THE REALITY.

| “We understood every word. We missed the meaning.”

DISCUSS A WORKING WITH INDIA BRIEFING

GLOBALSIMLABS.COM

This engagement was delivered before the founding of Global SIM Labs.

