

- to take the time to adequately train and ensure the commitment of the Indonesian plant supervisors (on whom almost everything hinged);
- to develop personal relationships;
- to teach expatriates some key interpersonal skills, such as the avoidance of direct criticism of employees in this face-saving Asian culture; and
- to use as much as possible intermediaries-cum-translators who understand both cultures (Indonesian engineering students in the U.S. proved invaluable).⁹³

A similar case study of a joint venture in China emphasized that understanding the host culture and such things as the Asian tendency to avoid conflict or blunt words does not mean that Western firms should merely brush problems under the rug. Western directness in squarely identifying responsibilities should be maintained, although diplomatically and at the beginning (i.e., during a hard-nosed negotiation phase) so that a firm understanding of expectations avoids conflicting interpretations down the road.⁹⁴ The need to understand other cultures should not invalidate the merits of one's own culture.

The literature on joint ventures also points out some problems of implementing this form of collaboration. The failure rate has been surprisingly high for joint ventures, perhaps as much as one half being aborted at some point before completion.⁹⁵ In particular, since the two parties inevitably have a mix of cooperative and competitive goals (they are usually in the same business, after all), success requires that expectations and anticipated benefits be made absolutely clear at the outset via careful (and, if need

93. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

94. Newman, William H., "Launching a Viable Joint Venture," *California Management Review*, Fall 1992, p. 73.

95. *Ibid.*, p. 69.