Passing on Anthropology

• Internship and Study Project • winter term 2020/2021 •

CultureWaves
Developing global collaboration

Internship

The study project was conducted at a company called *CultureWaves*. The company has set itself the goal of developing global collaboration and was founded by Christine Wirths. They mainly offer intercultural and virtual trainings, coachings and seminars and also address the areas of leadership development and team building. The office consists of three people, one of whom is an intern. There is a cooperation with about 200 professional coaches/trainers. The clients include both smaller companies and large corporations.

The pure workload in the company was about 45-48h per week. I started working at the office location in Bornheim-Merten near Bonn. However, due to the Sars-Cov2 pandemic and external circumstances, I had to move to the home office after 2 months and subsequently went through two relocations.

Work

My work has been mostly in projects: Here, in addition to coordination, it was also a matter of accompanying the processes. In addition to preparing measures, I also followed them up and took on many tasks, from photo documentation to coordinating cancellations. Before the measures were initiated, I created and evaluated needs analyses and prepared them graphically for the customer. Furthermore, I took over many research tasks, from customers to pictures to topics. Furthermore, I took over the applicant management and took over advertisements, pre-sorted applications and accompanied the interviews. In addition, I was able to contribute during the offer creation, support the website and write instructions. In addition, I produced various trainings on WebEx, Zoom and MS Teams and was able to provide technical support.

Research

During my research, I was mainly concerned with different issues around the design of seminars and trainings. Central here was the question of "when": When is which concept applied? Excitingly, it turned out during the study project that the same slides and conceptions are used differently. This has opened up another research angle: When is which interpretation consulted? How do the contexts differ? In addition, I have questioned which theories have been chosen and from which context they come. Furthermore, I have looked at when which methods are used. It was important for me to illuminate the ethnological side of everything. How much are ethnological competencies and theories addressed and passed on? How scientifically are contents prepared and passed on? And what reasons speak for or against other points of view?

Methods

Unfortunately, I could only proceed methodically to a limited extent, since the company was not happy about any research. For this reason, I was only able to take participant observations during job shadowing sessions and otherwise focused on an asynchronous analysis of the models and theories. Discussions and food for thought with colleagues were limited. However, I was able to exchange ideas with the trainers and look professionally into further perspectives and backgrounds. In addition to a monthly diary and a summary of what happened, I mainly dealt with the people and therefore created network analyses. I was also able to enter into dialogue with participants, taking on reflections and reactions. In addition to my work, I also consulted further literature and read up on other models and ideas. In addition to criticism, many possible deviations also caught my eye.

Findings

The company has always used the same methods and adapted them to the appropriate contexts by varying their interpretation. The factors team and company background have played a role here above all. For the sake of simplicity, theories by Hofstede, Meyer and Trompedaar were mainly used, but the criticisms of the theories were not discussed further. Overall, a less reflective use of the theories could be observed and in the temporal development an increasingly advanced access into psychological topics could be recorded. Critical inquiries and discussion beginnings were not pursued and/or heard also regarding this, this can be however also justified by the dynamic situation by illness, pandemic and time pressure and/or efficiency pressure. It remains open to question and reflect exactly these backgrounds and influences. However, this does not only refer to the work in the office, but above all to the necessary prerequisites of a successful intercultural measure with concepts of contemporary anthropology.

• Rebecca Sonn • Master Social and Cultural Athropology • rebecca-katharina.sonn@student.uni-tuebingen.de •