THE CREATION OF CATALYST, AN INTERCULTURAL TRAINING COMPANY

by

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Abstract

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This project was based on the creation of Catalyst Intercultural, an intercultural training company. To create the new company, client needs had to be identified and project management had to be established. Research was completed prior to the start of this project and a multicultural feedback group was established. Efficient project management also had to be established to facilitate working virtually and with team members who frequently changed.

The project itself encompassed five main tasks or categories of work. The first of these was the business organization, which resulted in a formal business plan. The next major task was the designing the company, which resulted in the brand, the look or image of the company and the marketing approach, including a website. Third was the development of a menu of services. The fourth step was to create an initial training with two parts: an in-person component and a self-study workbook. Finally, a public launch was planned. The launch had two phases: online and local.

By the end of the project, we had learned the important of our preparatory steps, especially establishing strong organization and project management. We were also very
satisfied with the role our feedback group played, and were surprised to find that we needed more work to accommodate corporate cultural differences than we needed to accommodate international cultural difference.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

The need to operate internationally is an increasing reality for many businesses today. When national borders are crossed, different cultures must merge and interact in a productive and beneficial way to promote success for all involved. This can be difficult and misunderstandings arise easily due to differences in perception, thinking, behavior, and communication styles. Whether the interactions are virtual or combine multiple cultures within the same geographic boundaries, these same concerns exist.

When intercultural issues are not handled appropriately, many problems can result. These can include attitudinal problems ranging from dislike and mistrust to stereotyping and exclusivity; communication problems resulting in inaccuracy, misunderstanding, and inefficiency; and counterproductive behaviors, tensions, and disagreement leading to decreased team effectiveness (Adler, 2002, pp. 134-138).

Expatriate assignments can fail, teams can dissolve, productivity can decrease, and business can be lost. On the other hand, when appropriately leveraged, diversity creates significant advantages like increased creativity, more flexible products and policies, limited "Groupthink," decreased stagnation, and novel approaches to problem-solving (Adler, pp. 138-140).

English for Life (EFL) is an organization based in Greenville, South Carolina, created in 2001 by Kim Carroll, offering a range of intercultural and language services. These services include communication and intercultural trainings and individual and
group language training and coaching. They also include an academy to train teachers and offer certification in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL), in collaboration with Greenville Technical College and the College of Charleston.

English for Life (EFL) provided services for several different multinational and global corporations as well as universities. The primary method of doing this was simply to develop programs to meet the needs expressed by their clients. However, because of the increasing demand for intercultural training and coaching services, EFL found itself overwhelmed and unable to market or organize effectively. Because of this, the decision was made to subdivide, creating a new company to house their intercultural corporate services, separating them from the TESOL academy and related functions.

This subdivision was necessary because the current services offered by EFL fell into two related but distinct categories: TESOL services and intercultural or corporate services. These two categories required very different marketing strategies and personnel. Managing both simultaneously under the same corporate structure had become confusing and inefficient. The original company is more well-known for its TESOL services, having existed for 15 years and emphasized this segment of its services until recently. It was hoped that separating the intercultural and corporate services and housing them under a new name, with different marketing, offerings, and personnel, will allow them to be represented more accurately and to target potential corporate clients more effectively. The end goal of the subdivision is for the new company to grow and entirely separate from the old company.

The new company will offer intercultural training and coaching targeted primarily at corporations and secondarily at universities. Individualized language training will be
offered as a supplementary service. The oversight and management of this subdivision and the subsequent creation of the new company, Catalyst Intercultural, has been the goal of this project.

**Overview of Catalyst Intercultural**

EFL previously worked with two main categories of clients that Catalyst intends to serve in the future. The first, and primary market, is corporate. These clients frequently have teams that include members from Brazil, Germany, Mexico, France, and the U.S. Sometimes these teams include members from India, China, and Japan as well. Members of these teams are sometimes physically present in the same country, and sometimes they are working together virtually. Often these clients require training to help these teams communicate more efficiently, work together more productively, or manage cultural and team conflicts that have already arisen. Furthermore, these same clients often require training for expatriate employees coming into the U.S. from these same countries, or for American expatriates preparing for overseas assignments. Personalized language training for these individuals and their families is often needed as well. Examples of previous EFL clients in this category, which in the future would belong to Catalyst, have included Michelin, GS Gleitlager, Dish Network, Trelleborg, Kawasaki, Bosch - Brasil, and Vivo (Telefônica Brasil), among others.

The second category of client that will be served by Catalyst in the future will be educational. EFL previously worked with several universities and education service providers to train teachers, trainers, and other personnel in intercultural skills. EFL also developed programs for working with international students such as increasing retention, improving academic skills for success in American universities, and intercultural
communication. Examples of clients in this category have included Wofford College, Clemson University, Greenville Literacy Association, and the SC State Department of Education. Catalyst will be taking over the service of these clients as well.

In addition to servicing these two groups of existing clients, Catalyst hopes to grow and increase the intercultural training services offered and to establish a firm and stable clientele in this area. Catalyst also hopes to expand these services to eventually include clients outside of the current local region serviced.

**Overview of Project**

The goal of this capstone project was to create and successfully manage the subdivision of English for Life (EFL) and the creation of Catalyst Intercultural. This change was necessary in order to create a more realistic business structure for EFL, to develop a better way to market and approach customers, and to allow EFL and Catalyst to focus on completely separate projects, thus making space for better work to be done in both arenas. The successful implementation of this project was crucially important for English for Life because it will facilitate the successful growth and development of the company. It is additionally important on a larger scale because, if Catalyst is successful as a company, its existence and work will contribute to the field of intercultural training by raising awareness and improving the skills of individuals.

This project established the basic structure and related materials of Catalyst Intercultural and created an initial intercultural training to be offered. The project included five primary steps:

1) Planning and creation of the basic business structure and business plan
2) Creation of the website and initial marketing materials
3) Creation of a "menu" of services to be offered by Catalyst Intercultural

4) Development of a sample training, including the training plan and materials, for promotion of the company’s services.

5) A public launch of the company

K. Carroll, the owner of English for Life and a partner in Catalyst and I developed the business plan. The basic structure of the business was established, including a general description of the company. Roles were assigned, responsibilities were divided, an operations plan was created, and a marketing plan was developed. Finally, an initial budget and financial plan was drafted. The basic points of a formal partnership agreement were outlined, to be reviewed later with a lawyer as a legally binding version of the agreement is created. The last step of this process was to draft a complete and official business plan, including all these details.

Following this, the marketing materials were created. This included the website, logo design and branding, social media activation, all marketing copy to be posted on the site, and basic printed materials such as business cards. This design work was done by subcontracting a professional designer to create the logo, design the materials, and build the website. However, all copy on the website was written by either me or Carroll, and all final decisions regarding the designs and materials have been made by us.

The next step was to decide which services Catalyst would offer, itemize them, and identify the ideal clients for each service. Once these were decided upon, they were outlined in a logical way, a pricing structure was created, and a general training structure was outlined. After that, the services were described and organized in a "menu" on the website that is logical, easy to read, and clear.
After the business plan was created, the marketing materials were developed, and the services to be offered were itemized. Then I created and tested the first training to be offered by Catalyst. The training I created was a 50-minute introductory training, designed to be delivered multiple times for free and to act as a promotional tool and sample of the kind and style of training Catalyst will offer. The training included two equally important components: the training session itself and a workbook. The first component was the in-person training, which provided a fundamental introduction to intercultural communication and related skills. The second component of the training was a workbook covering the same basic materials as the live training, but designed to be read and worked through independently. This workbook would be offered online as a free resource through the website. The goal of both components of the training was to provide some basic but useful intercultural information and skills, create increased awareness of, curiosity about, and interest in intercultural training, and promote Catalyst as a provider of this kind of training.

The training was given three times during the course of this project: first to a feedback group composed of friends and associates with a similar background to Catalyst's target clients; the second two times it was delivered to the public as part of the public launch of the company.

This final step to coordinate a public launch for the company included bringing the website live, activating social media, planning and coordinating the two presentations of free training, and inviting attendees. The public launch took place the last week in April.
Navigating this Paper

The following chapters will describe the project in more detail, as well as present an overview of the literature and a description of the methods. Chapter 2, Literature Review, will give an overview of a variety of useful research discussing training needs, both general and specific to potential Catalyst clients, business design, and marketing methods. Chapter 3, Methods, will outline how the steps to the completion of this project were accomplished in a more general sense. Chapter 4, Results, will include an overview of what work was done and how it was accomplished in greater detail, any feedback received at any point during the process, and any changes made as a result of this feedback or for any other reason. Chapter 5, Discussions and Conclusions, will analyze the experience of creating this business, noting similarities or differences from the research, difficulties encountered, and any conclusions that can be drawn about future work. Appendices will include a copy of the business plan, a links to the website and other online marketing materials created, copies of any printed marketing materials produced, and a copy of the training plan, workbook, and other materials. References are listed at the end.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Developing Intercultural Competence

Before a specific training program could be developed, general themes of what constitutes effective intercultural training needed to be identified. What is and is not intercultural training, and what general themes, topics, and approaches have been proven to work best? This information is important to this project because it will guide both the development of individual trainings and decisions regarding what trainings should be developed to create a useful and effective menu of services.

According to Horan (1976), an emphasis on history, politics, economics, and foreign policy should be avoided. These have not been proven to be useful or effective at developing increased intercultural effectiveness. Instead, she said, trainings should focus on building specific skills and developing more open attitudes. Learning objectives should include development of positive attitudes about target cultures, intercultural communication skills, and a deeper understanding of the original culture (p. 28). Horan also noted useful guidelines for appropriate interaction and addressing likely cultural challenges, and information regarding personal changes or stresses that can be expected (p. 30). She commented that culture-specific training is useful, but should focus in these areas.

Kaufmann, Engelzou, and Gárcia-Gallego (2013) recommended that an assessment tool be utilized, if possible, to identify gaps in individual learners' understandings so that training can be provided to close them. They recommended a
blended approach, including an assessment, a generalized training, and some form of more specific, and personalized training (like coaching) (pp. 28-29). They also pointed out that research shows that individuals who tend to adapt successfully across cultures share certain personality traits (p. 32). These traits can be measured by tools, such as the Global Competencies Inventory, and developed through coaching.

According to Pusch (1994), all programs need to be interactive, tailored to participants' needs, and enjoyable. Different types of participants will have different training needs. Some examples are whether trainings will be given pre-departure or for orientation once trainees arrive in the target culture. She indicated that in-country development trainings can be useful for expatriates already abroad as well as individuals who remain in their home culture but must work in an intercultural team. Re-entry training is also useful and must address different needs (pp. 130-131). The needs of participants in each category of training would be different. Furthermore, she concluded, training needs could be affected by whether the participants are staff or faculty receiving sojourners, host volunteers or community program coordinators, multicultural managers, or trainers (p. 131). This information is important because it provides a useful guide regarding what styles, topics, and formats of training Catalyst should offer.

Multicultural teams are another common potential participant group, and such teams face unique challenges, especially in the areas of trust and communication. Rod (2012) recommended a four-step process that included analyzing the cultural elements present in the system, understanding the system as a system and locating it on Bennett's developmental model, finding common ground and agreed-upon strategies to align the system, and identifying action steps for individual team members. She also
recommended that team leaders cultivate self-awareness and trust (pp. 32-33). This approach would require a blend of general intercultural skills training, group consulting, and individual coaching.

Hültebrugge and Schille (2008) focused on another unique group of potential training participants: virtual team members. According to them, these learners must develop the skills to cope with intercultural issues and communicate effectively, sometimes across multiple disparate cultural boundaries, while remaining immersed in their home culture. These individuals face unique advantages and challenges. In some ways, this kind of work is easier because the individuals avoid the personal upheaval and stress of moving abroad and transplanting their families. Additionally, virtual teams are less expensive for organizations to support. However, intercultural misunderstandings are increasingly likely due to the lack of face-to-face and social contact, especially when dealing with relationship-oriented cultures. Time zone differences and differing communication styles heighten the chances for misunderstanding, and implicit knowledge is more difficult to transfer. This is particularly demanding for high-context cultures. Finally, individuals are expected to transition smoothly and continuously between the original and target culture, which is more challenging than simply adapting to one new culture and staying in that mode of being (p. 273). Hültebrugge and Schille suggested that these individuals need culture-general and culture-specific training as well as personalized interviewing and feedback to identify specific problem areas. Such training can work well when provided virtually (pp. 274-275). These trainings can be equally effective given as one-on-one, individualized coaching, or in small groups.
Regardless of these factors, all trainings should seek to diminish ethnocentrism, especially for U.S. American participants (Horan, 1976, p. 26). All of this accords very well with the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity suggested by M. J. Bennett (1993), as discussed later in this chapter.

Fowler and Blohm (2004) provided an extremely in-depth analysis of the various common methods at use in intercultural training at the time of their writing. According to their research, coaching is a particularly effective means of providing training in intercultural effectiveness, performance in multicultural settings, and establishing cross-cultural relationships (p. 40). Fowler and Blohm also pointed out that while utilizing packaged training materials is potentially extremely useful, some customization is usually required (p. 41). The culture of participants, and their preferred learning style, should be considered before training styles are determined for the training to be maximally effective (pp. 41-42).

Fowler and Blohm (2004) recommended that didactic and experiential methods be blended in any training; in other words, trainers should not rely exclusively on passive information-distilling techniques like lectures and videos. More interactive methods should be blended in, such as reflection, discussion, and activities (p. 40). This is true across cultures; however, the participants' cultural backgrounds are likely to impact their preferred learning styles. For example, Asian cultures prefer indirect methods such as storytelling, while U.S. and European cultures tend to prefer more linear approaches (p. 41). This also includes the amount of rule-following and procedural adherence that is expected, such as how individuals approach a simulation game. How personal, emotional,
and expressive participants are comfortable getting is culturally based, as well as how much risk-taking and potential loss of face is tolerable (p. 42).

Other factors that should be considered, according to Fowler and Blohm (2004) are general communication and cognitive styles. Communication styles include "patterns of expression and rules for interaction that reflect the values and norms of a culture" (p. 44). These styles can be a factor of nationality, ethnicity, or personal background and preference. Cognitive styles include "how individuals gather information from their environment and how they organize and apply this knowledge" (p. 44). Once again, this preference can be cultural or personal. Fowler and Blohm commented that it is important for trainers to understand the communication and cognitive styles likely to be present in their group in order to choose methods and activities that will be the most beneficial and palatable for their learners.

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle has provided a model for addressing issues in training environments that can result from personal or culturally based differences in learning, communication, and cognitive styles. Kolb created a four-part framework to describe learning styles: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Trainers can work around this cycle to effectively address all learning styles and to predict what kinds of activities might be most effective. Fowler and Blohm (2004) list specific activities that are especially effective with each style. Concrete experience utilizes small group discussions, examples, exercises, trigger films, and autobiographical information. Reflective observation draws on journals, thought questions, brainstorming, observation, checklists, and structured tasks. Abstract conceptualization emphasizes lectures, papers, theories,
model building, references, and research. Active experimentation prefers projects, fieldwork, case studies, simulations, games, demonstrations, and opportunities to practice (pp. 42-43).

According to Fowler and Blohm (2004), training methods must also be selected based on learning objectives. When the objective is that the participants acquire knowledge, a variety of methods can be useful, ranging from lectures, videos, debates, panels, and interviews to work stations, field trips, and computer-based learning. If the participants need to build skills, demonstrations and instructions followed by opportunities to practice are crucial, as are appropriate feedback, coaching, case studies, and simulations. Finally, attitudes can be developed through discussion, case studies, debates, self-analysis, feedback, coaching, simulations, and field trips (p. 46).

In addition to the general question of what constitutes effective training topics and methods, there are two primary theoretical frameworks that explain how intercultural competence is developed. It is important to understand both these frameworks when deciding what training is needed, how to approach participants, and whether a program will be effective for providing that training.

The first framework is the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) created by M. J. Bennett (1993). This model proposes that individual intercultural sensitivity and effectiveness arise in developmental stages that can be identified and to which training can be tailored (pp. 22-23). These stages include denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration.

M. J. Bennett (1993) has defined each of the stages. Denial can take two forms: isolation or separation. Isolation can be physical or ideological. It is categorized by the
"maintenance of wide categories for cultural difference" (p. 31), or the simple inability to recognize cultural difference. Simple exposure to difference is the most effective way to facilitate development, which can be indicated by movement towards overt separation (p. 32). Separation is intentional isolation motivated by discomfort with cultural difference. Generally this is benign, but can manifest in truly harmful ways such as genocide. Even so, this is a slight development of intercultural sensitivity because it requires, by its very nature, some awareness of cultural difference (pp. 32-33). Non-threatening cultural awareness activities are the most effective way to address this stage.

Defense, according to M. J. Bennett (1993), includes denigration, superiority, and reversal. Denigration is the most common expression and includes negative stereotyping and overt hostility. M.J. Bennett explained that this can be combined with superiority. Sometimes, when a person recognizes this in themselves, they are shocked and retreat into separation. According to M.J. Bennett, development in this case is best facilitated by reassurance that such reactions are normal and temporary, and continued exposure will increase individual comfort with difference (pp. 35-36). Superiority reflects the overly positive evaluation of an individual's own cultural status rather than the denigration of others' (p. 37). M. J. Bennett explained that this is a developmentally positive step because difference is acknowledged but not denigrated. Development occurs when cultural pride is allowed but not overemphasized, and good aspects of other cultures are highlighted (p. 40). Reversal is the third potential response identified by M. J. Bennett. Reversal occurs when a new culture is substituted for the individual's own and held as superior. The best way to address this phase is to either inoculate individuals before it happens by warning them it is possible, or, if it is already in effect, to point out the
weaknesses of idealized groups and focus attention on positive aspects that are general or shared (p. 40).

M. J. Bennett (1993) continued by defining the next stage, *minimization*. Minimization is the idea that at their core, all humans are essentially the same and cultural differences are unimportant or superficial. This includes *physical universalism*, the idea that all humans have shared physical characteristics which dictate essentially understandable behavior, and *transcendent universalism*, the idea that all humans are subject to some form of universal law or principle. The second idea is obviously common in religious contexts as well as within some philosophical and political systems. According to M. J. Bennett, most individuals in this stage feel that authenticity should be sufficient to promote effective communication, and this stage easily disintegrates backwards into defense. A major paradigmatic shift is necessary to move to the next stage of development and is likely to be difficult and disorienting for those experiencing it. Discussion and exposure to members of other culture groups, highlighting difference in a positive and healthy way, and exposure to people who have already successfully passed through minimization are the most effective ways to handle this phase (pp. 41-46).

*Acceptance, adaptation, and integration* are M. J. Bennett’s (1993) three final stages of development and are all already ethnorelative. Acceptance acknowledges and respects cultural difference, including behavioral and value differences (pp. 47-49). Practical application of cultural difference is most helpful to facilitate continued development, including training in communication styles and value development (pp. 50-51). M. J. Bennett pointed out that simulations can be very effective at this point (pp. 51).
In M. J. Bennett’s (1993) adaptation stage, all cultures are respected and appreciated, including the individual's own. New skills and ideas are added to the individual's own worldview, and empathy and pluralism are developed. Multiple cultural frames of reference are created, utilized, and internalized (pp. 51-59). M. J. Bennett stated that development past this stage is best facilitated by real cross-cultural interaction (pp. 58-59).

Integration is the final stage in M. J. Bennett’s DMIS (1993), when an individual's identity includes patterns different from his own and he or she has psychologically accepted multiple realities (p. 59). In adaptation, individuals see themselves as coexisting with multiple frames of reality. In integration, the person internalizes these differences. An individual in integration is ready to evaluate cultural difference and choose frames of references intentionally. This can result, M. J. Bennett said, in difficulty and stress for the individual at this phase, because they are capable of seeing and understanding multiple perspectives, and experiencing each as part of themselves. Education about this phase and reassurance that the difficulties experienced here are normal are useful developmental tools (p. 64-65).

Karim (2003) utilized this developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) to create his developmental model for intercultural consciousness. In his model, he combined the DMIS framework with transformative leadership theory to identify several skills and attributes that those who hope to lead across cultures require. According to Karim, there are several specific intercultural skills that are needed in order to lead effectively in a multicultural environment. Often, leaders will already have developed these skills, but may not be using them in an intercultural context (p. 36).
Karim (2003) identified the first of these as *cognitive complexity and critical thinking*. Interculturally, this means having a mature, well-developed understanding of how culture impacts behavior. This also includes the ability to integrate new information, avoid stereotypical thinking, and identify subtle connections between apparently disparate ideas (p. 36). Next, he listed *perspective multidimensionality*, the ability to shift worldview or perspective during decision making. This allowed the individual to understand the ideas of culturally different colleagues (p. 36). Next, Karim described *interpretive multiplicity* as the ability to understand incoming information in a variety of ways; he noted that this skill increases effectiveness in intercultural communication and the ability to arrive at contextually appropriate conclusions (p. 36). The ability to see the big picture he called *contextual analysis*. This requires that leaders are able to effectively self-analyze as well as understand and consider historical, political, and cultural contexts. *Affective and emotional resilience, tolerance of ambiguity, cultural self-awareness, and cultural empathy* are all even more important in intercultural contexts as well.

Karim (2003) also proposed five developmental stages that align with those proposed by M. J. Bennett (1993) and offered a personality description of each: naive universalist (denial), intentional supremacist (defense), reluctant minimalist (minimalism), fragmented relativist (acceptance), and integrated functionalist (adaptation/integration). *Naive universalists* are incapable of understanding cultural context and do not usually believe that it exists, causing them to marginalize and alienate culturally different colleagues. *Intentional supremacists* are aware of other cultures, attitudes, and beliefs, but simply believe their own is superior. They believe everything
would be solved easily if only everyone else would adopt their ways of thinking and being. This can lead to unethical conduct and blaming of others for any problems.

Reluctant minimalists, according to Karim, are aware of cultural differences and value other cultures, but don't know how to deal effectively with them. They generally address cultural difference by downplaying or minimizing it, which can cause others frustration and can cause them to miss important details. However, they are easily offended if they are called culturally insensitive and are making a genuine effort to be culturally effective.

Fragmented relativists make the opposite mistake; they overemphasize difference and minimize commonality. They can be indecisive, ineffective, and suffer from much higher levels of personal stress and identity fragmentation. Finally, for Karim, Integrated functionalists are the only ones with the skills necessary to effectively handle intercultural situations routinely. They understand cultural diversity, including both commonality and difference, and possess the mental skills necessary to process and manage difference (pp. 37-38).

An additional framework that is important to intercultural training is the framework of challenge-and-support developed by Sanford (as cited by J. M. Bennett, 2009). This theory, according to J. M. Bennett, proposed that balance between the challenge an individual faces and the support available to that person are essential for effective functioning or learning (p. 10). To be effective, she said, trainings must include enough challenge to push the learner to explore things outside what is already known and understood, and enough support to create a safe and encouraging environment to empower the learner (pp. 10-12).
According to J. M. Bennett (2009), if too much challenge is included, learners will become resistant to learning or overwhelmed. This is particularly important in intercultural training contexts, where the material itself is likely to be fairly challenging to the learners. Furthermore, in an intercultural training setting, too much challenge can activate any remaining elements of denial or defense, leading to the creation of additional intercultural problems rather than their solution. However, some amount of challenge is necessary to facilitate learning. The least challenging activity would simply be the review and reinforcement of concepts the learner has already digested; however, this does not lead to the assimilation of new information or knowledge. Challenge can be found in both the activities and topics selected (pp. 10-13).

J. M. Bennett (2012) explained that adequate support is necessary to balance the amount of challenge utilized. The equation is simple: the higher the degree of challenge, the higher the need for support. The less the degree of challenge, the less support is needed and the more learners can be expected to be self-sufficient. Support can be created by choosing a slower pace, more easily acceptable activities, less challenging topics, or more trainer involvement (pp. 10-12).

**Business Design**

Morgan (2006) wrote that organization itself is a cultural phenomenon, surpassing national and cultural boundaries to create significant attitudes, values, and behaviors that are defined by both individuals' professional roles and organizational routines (p. 116). These include a "willingness to separate daily life and work, follow rigid organizational routines, live in one place and work in another, wear uniforms, defer to authority," and others (p. 117). Professional roles and organizational structures create their own culture.
According to Morgan, as a business is designed, it is important to remember that the way it is structured will play a significant role in the creating the culture in which the employees will live and work. Furthermore, Morgan pointed out that culture will give rise (or fail to give rise) to motivation, drive, enthusiasm, and creativity that will help determine whether the business is, in the end, a success or failure. Furthermore, Morgan continued, the structure and culture of each business impacts and is impacted by in turn the national culture, and the culture of organization itself (pp. 116-118). To put it briefly, the structure of a system is inseparable from its culture. Therefore, the structure of a business is a crucially important element to consider when a business is being formed.

What elements constitute this structure? Structure exists on multiple levels. First, each business will have a general framework, within which the more specific elements of structure will operate. This level is usually visible to outsiders who have a basic familiarity with the company (Morgan, p 116). Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) identified four archetypes into which most corporate structures can be classified: the family, the Eiffel Tower, the guided missile, and the incubator (pp. 195-217). These archetypes, they stated, provide an easily visualized, useful tool to understand the general framework within which an organization is operating, and give a clue as to what some core values and cultural elements of that organization might be. In real life, most of the time an organization borrows elements from more than one structure, although usually one structure still dominates (p. 195).

For Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012), family systems emphasize relationship and hierarchy. This structure is power-oriented, but in a nurturing and
respectful way, cultivating long-term relationships and significant loyalty. They noted that older, more experienced members mentor and assist younger members, who trust that they will be promoted in due time. This give-and-take provides a large degree of personal pleasure and sense of fulfillment to the employees, which is a major motivating factor (p. 196). These structures tend to be high-context, with much information assumed and known implicitly by members (p. 197). Relationships, both personal and professional, are far more important than any of the details of the job itself. Understanding is more intuitive and less fact-based. They commented that "conversations are preferred to research questionnaires, and insights are preferred to objective data. *Who* is doing something is more important than *what* is being done" (p. 203). Personal connections are considered equally important to professional qualifications and associations, and politics can be a key consideration (p. 202). Low priority is given to "efficiency" and higher priority to "effectiveness" (p. 204). These structures are not as common in the US and European cultures.

The *Eiffel Tower* structure, according to Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012), is a more typically Western way of approaching work. In this archetype, the structure is highly bureaucratic and predetermined. While it is hierarchical like the Family model, the difference is that each level of the hierarchy is created by individuals empowered by their function and role. *Who* is at the top does not matter; what matters is their ability to perform the job as described. Those lower in status, they noted, are obligated to submit to those higher in status because without this hierarchy, the system could not function (p. 204). Relationships are specific to work alone, and all authority stems solely from a person's occupancy of a specific role. Away from work, the power
balance ceases to exist (p. 205). Professional qualifications are extremely important; personal connection or involvement doesn't really matter. This structure is essentially the exact opposite of the family structure (p. 206).

The third archetype is the *guided missile* culture. This structure is different from both of the previous structures, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) commented, because it is far more egalitarian, but it is similar to the Eiffel tower in that it is task-oriented and impersonal (p. 211). This structure is extremely goal-oriented; the structure only exists to accomplish a specific objective. Roles are not fixed and are changeable, with each member doing everything in their power to accomplish the group mission. There is little hierarchy because each member's individual skills and expertise are equally crucial at varying times. Therefore, the power structure must shift continuously. Leaders emerge but their primary role is to coordinate, not direct (pp. 212-213). These structures generate little long-term loyalty and are constantly changing, and they rely on highly knowledgeable, expert professionals to function. Motivation is intrinsic; members are personally interested in and committed to the goal. Change happens naturally, easily, and quickly. There tends to be high turnover, because once a goal is reached, a member no longer has any reason to remain with the organization and will seek out a new interesting goal to pursue (p. 214).

The final archetype is the *incubator* culture. In this structure, the fulfillment of individual is paramount and the organizational structure is secondary. Organizations are tolerated only to "serve as incubators for self-expression and self-fulfillment" (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012, p. 215). The incubator system is personal and egalitarian, and has very little structure at all. The structure simply provides personal
convenience and keeps things running (p. 215). The roles of the individual participants are crucial. These organizations are often entrepreneurial, partnerships, consultancies, or groups of professionals sharing resources. Their role as an organization is to assist each other, foster ideas, and respond well to issues and opportunities that arise (p. 215). There is virtually no hierarchy, but there is often intense emotional commitment, especially to the work being done, and spontaneity and informality are valued. The organization is intimate, relationship-based, and nurturing. These companies need to remain small to be sustainable with this structure.

Regardless of which overall framework a company utilizes, within that framework several internal structures will exist that serve to flesh out the company's overall culture. Waterman, Peters, and Phillips (1980) created a framework they called the 7-S model to describe these aspects of organizational culture. Elements include structure, systems, strategy, shared values, skills, staff, and style (pp. 19-25). Each of these elements has a specific but interrelated definition, and every organization includes every element.

Each element is important, but is not enough to explain an organization by itself. According to Waterman, et al.’s (1980) model, it is necessary for all the elements to be well-designed and to work well together for a business to be effective. Structure refers to the hierarchical design of the organization and would include such archetypes and organization models as those proposed by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012). Waterman, et al. continued to describe strategy, the methods a company uses to compete and to respond to environmental change. Systems are the day-to-day procedures that keep the business running. Style includes the way time is spent, symbolic behavior, and
individual corporate personality or culture. *Staff* includes the people in the company, systems for managing and developing these people, and the attitudes and behavior of the people themselves. *Skills* are the things a company does best, the areas where they outshine the competition and the attributes that make the company recognizable and memorable (Waterman, et al., 1980, pp. 13-26). *Superordinate goals* include “guiding concepts--a set of values and aspirations, often un-written, that goes beyond the conventional formal statement of corporate objectives” (Waterman et al. p. 24).

Morgan (2006) discussed the importance of understanding the organization as a type of "brain," capable of learning (pp. 76-114). A learning organization is capable of adapting more easily to change and correcting errors when they occur. This model emphasizes the flow of information as an important element of organization and organizational learning, especially for organizations that have a more "virtual" and less physical structure.

In addition, Morgan (2006) identified five principles that guide the construction of such a system. First, the whole must be built into all the parts through shared values and sense of purpose, utilizing networked information systems, designing structures that can grow large while staying small, and creating teams with diversified roles (Morgan, 2006, pp. 99-105). This echoed Waterman, et al. (1980) in their emphasis on superordinate goals and staff. Both Morgan and Waterman, et al. agreed that without these attributes, organizations tend to fracture as they grow larger or deal with internal change.

Second, according to Morgan (2006) redundancy allows for growth because it creates excess space, which prevents stress and allows for reallocation of resources (pp. 107-108). As Morgan explained, if an organization depends on one person exclusively to
provide a certain service, and that person either leaves the company, changes positions, or becomes unavailable for some other reason, everything that person brought to the company is lost without redundancy. Multiple players need shared skills, and multiple systems need to be capable of handling all crucial functions. In this way, the entire system is not disrupted because of a change in one area, and no one element is over-utilized or exhausted. This can be a challenge for small organizations with limited resources, but is still important to consider (pp. 107-108).

Third, according to Morgan (2006), variety needs to exist to allow a team to deal with the complexity it will encounter as it works. The skills to deal with each demand likely to be faced by an individual or a team should be present in that person or team (p. 109). In other words, each team needs to be essentially self-sufficient, encompassing enough variety of skill and knowledge that it can operate without needing constant support. Occasional unusual demands may for the individual or team to seek help from the greater organization or even outside the organization, but this should be exception, not the rule (p. 109).

Morgan’s (2006) fourth guideline is that management should provide limited specifications for how the system should self-organize and how individuals and teams should operate, ideally no more than the minimum necessary for launching each new project (pp. 110-111). The system, teams, and individuals should be allowed the maximum amount of freedom possible. Finally, Morgan stated that organizations must promote a mindset that encourages "learning to learn" (p. 111). This includes both actively seeking personal development, and, more importantly, encouraging learning from mistakes and adaptation. Morgan pointed out that with this mindset, difficulties are
seen as opportunities to improve and adapt on a grander scale, not just problems to be avoided or dealt with temporarily (p. 111).

**Marketing**

Marketing is all about exercising influence over potential clients and motivating them to purchase the service you are offering. Cialdini (2009) explored the art of generating influence and illuminated several key concepts. First of all is the idea that many human actions can be reduced to a simple *fixed action pattern*, a psychological behavioral pattern that is activated by a *trigger feature*, which provokes a standard response. In other words, many actions that humans and other animals take are explainable in very simple terms: one detail of the environment was noticed, usually subconsciously, and this sparked a specific and predictable behavioral response. Knowing the trigger features in the clientele can help organizations influence them to act, making the decision to acquire their services more automatic (pp. 2-10). Such features can be built into marketing copy to inspire quick action on the part of potential clients.

Another automatic response Cialdini (2009) described is the *contrast principle*. This concept basically states that if an individual becomes adapted to one (undesirable) state of being, a contrasting state of being will seem to be more different (and desirable) after exposure to the first state. For example, one service can seem less expensive to a client if the client is first shown several more expensive options, or one option can seem better if the client is first shown several unappealing alternatives (pp. 12-16).

According to Cialdini (2009), an important basic norm of human behavior called *reciprocity* can also be leveraged by businesses (p. 19). Research has shown that most humans are inspired to return favors and services, even if the services were not requested
by the recipient. This aligns with a marketing strategy urged by Forleo (2015). She stressed the importance of providing potential clients with high-quality, useful information without charging so that they begin to develop a relationship with the business. In return, ask for email addresses to begin building a list. Forleo suggested that one continue providing such content to these potential clients so that they willingly stay involved with the company, and utilize the list to disseminate marketing materials at the same time. In this way, clients build a relationship with the company and a sense of obligation, which means that, according to the principle explained by Cialdini (2009), they are more likely to choose to utilize your services in the future instead of a competitor's.

Providing social proof is another tactic suggested by Cialdini (2009). The idea that clients look to what has worked for other clients in the past, and what has a demonstrable success history, suggests several marketing strategies, such as case studies, statistics, and other social or demographic evidence. This effect is strongest when the group acting and the group demonstrating the action are more similar (pp. 98-108). Similarly, Cialdini’s research has shown that people are more easily influenced by those they know well, like, and with whom they can find common ground (pp. 106-108). Godin (2009) concurred: "The desire to do what people we admire are doing is the glue that keeps our society together. It's the secret ingredient in every successful marketing venture as well" (The most important worldview, para. 2). Repeated contact and similarity both build liking, as does an attractive appearance (p. 172). Again, this correlates with Forleo's (2015) method of relationship-building through repeated contact.
Godin (2009) built on these ideas, encouraging marketers to understand their potential clients' worldviews. According to Godin, a worldview includes the client’s biases, where they place their attention, and their response (or, to use Cialdini’s (2009) term, *liking*) to the presentation of the service. This includes reactions to the presenter's choice of media, tone of voice, and the words that are used (Godin, *Who we are affects what we see*, para. 2-5). If the marketer understands these factors from their clients' perspectives, they can easily tell stories that speak to them on a personal level and influence rapid decision making. Again, Forleo (2015) concurred, suggesting a similar technique. Forleo has urged businesses to develop an intimate and detailed profile of an "ideal client" and to create tailored marketing that speaks to that individual or organization (bschool.com). Taken together, according to Godin, (2009), all of these factors create the first step of designing effective marketing: identify and understand the target client's worldview and frame your story in those terms.

Godin’s (2009) second step is to understand and utilize the way the human brain processes information. According to Godin, clients first notice difference, then begin creating rules regarding the cause that created the difference, then begin to predict outcomes based on this new information, and finally apply that rule to everything similar and everything they expect in the future (Step two). Step three is to recognize that humans tend to create extremely fast first impressions based on very little information, and once that impression is made, they resist changing it (Step three). Step four is to begin to tell stories that create positive first impressions, encourage clients to draw the right conclusions, and identify in a personal way with the product or company.
Finally, Godin (2009) emphasized the importance of being authentic and honest and delivering a quality product. According to Godin, this will create loyal clientele who spread your services by word of mouth (The cigarette preferred by doctors!). According to Godin, if you are authentic, the details line up, people engage with the new idea, and the trend begins to spread itself (Every picture tells a story). Godin pointed out that trying to change people's minds is far more difficult that simply being authentic. According to him, when you deliver a product that the company truly believes in and is proud of and make sure that the story is well-told, the business will grow itself (Soy Luck Club).

In discussing the challenges of marketing across multiple cultural markets, Carter (2014) concurred that a storytelling approach, which highlighted the values and images dominant in each market, could be effective (p. 2). Marketing needs to be specific enough to attract people but broad enough to be applicable across multiple cultural markets; in all cases, it needs to tell a story that connects with the client and is compelling. The following illustrates Carter’s approach.

There really isn’t anything different to it other than you’ve just got to nail a brilliant story. At the moment, our Kenco brand is doing a campaign centered on this initiative they have in Honduras called “Coffee vs. Gangs.” It’s an incredible story about the origin of the company, the products and the actual ethics of the brand. With Philadelphia Cream Cheese, we’re able to tell incredibly engaging stories about eating occasions and family parties. With Cadbury, it’s telling stories about feeling the joy about the actual product or the joy we’re bringing to consumers. There’s different types of creativity, different types of content that work best for each brand, but ultimately, great imagery and shockingly good copywriting really works for us in telling a story. (p. 3)

Chao, Hong, Prybutok, and Blankson (2012) also found that national culture influences values and social pressures, which in turn influences customer behavior (p.
12). For example, while perceived value for the price was an important factor for Chinese customers, this did not show a strong affect on U.S. American clients. On the other hand, Chao et al. noted, U.S. American customers were more strongly affected by their perception of the service quality. Customer satisfaction showed a stronger link to customer behavior in general among Chinese customers, demonstrating that Chinese customers are more likely to change their purchasing behavior based on their satisfaction than U.S. American clients (p. 19). While this research by Chao et al. emphasized Chinese-U.S. American client comparison, other trends were noted. For example, like the Chinese clients, Ecuadorian clients' behavior was strongly linked to their satisfaction in general. Asian clients tended to emphasize quality, reliability, empathy, and trust. Clients from English-speaking countries emphasized service, recoverability, and responsiveness (p. 11).

Risko and Wiwczaroski (2014) pointed out that differences between national cultures are deep and include sensitivity to such subtle influences as images and colors (p. 445). They also suggested that a different type of client now existed, that they call the "global citizen" (p. 444). This individual has extensive international experience and will be affected by cultural factors drawn from a variety of backgrounds. Some key elements markets should consider when designing effective cultural marketing include symbols, words, colors, and associations, preferred media channels, and work vs. leisure patterns (p. 445). Names should be checked for acceptability in the target language. Cultural preferences for certain features should be considered. Imagery used in advertising campaigns, including colors, gestures, and symbols, should function appropriately in the
target market. Values and religion should be considered. Media use and sales channels should also align with those preferred by the target culture (pp. 446-447).

According to research performed by Littrell and Miller (2001), the diffusion theory proposed by Rogers (1995) played a significant role in cross-cultural marketing. This theory proposed that five basic factors influence an innovation's rate of acceptance: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. *Relative advantage* refers to visible improvements over any old models, *compatibility* refers to how easily the product can coexist or interact with previously accepted products or models, *complexity* refers to the level of challenge adoption of the innovation is perceived to involve, *trialability* is the degree to which the product can be tested on a small-scale basis, and *observability* is the rate which the innovation can be observed being utilized by influential members of the target group. Littrell and Miller (2001) found that these factors are all significant cross-culturally, and that the target culture's perception of these factors is crucial to its acceptance of the innovation. While Littrell and Miller were working to answer questions specific to the garment industry, their finding is significant to many different industries and applications.
Chapter 3: Methods

This project, as noted earlier, will result in the subdivision of an existing intercultural company, English for Life Academy, into a second, new company, Catalyst Intercultural. The new company will offer intercultural training services to corporate and educational clients.

My role in this project will be to coordinate and oversee the subdivision process and the creation of the new company, working closely with my colleague, Kim Carroll, owner of English for Life. When the new company is founded, Carroll and I will be equal partners in its ownership and administration. The majority of the planning, structuring, and developing will be done by me, but will need to be in agreement with her and with her help and input. While I am working on developing the company structure and materials, Carroll will be working on networking, meeting with potential clients, negotiating future contracts, and maintaining the current services we already offer as English for Life.

The primary tasks facing Catalyst can be divided into five categories:

1) Basic business structure and plan
2) Website creation and initial marketing materials
3) A menu of services to be offered and an initial pricing structure
4) Promotional training to be offered, and materials
5) A public launch of the business
Needs Assessment

In addition to these tasks, client needs had to be identified. This was accomplished via two steps. First, I had done research prior to the beginning of this project with the goal of describing the needs of clients and the current trends in the intercultural training industry to meet those needs (Beauchamp, 2015). This research was utilized as well as best practices identified by the current research in the field, as described in the Literature Review.

The second means of ensuring that the product created met client needs was to establish a volunteer feedback group. This group was compiled from friends and associates with long-term relationships with English for Life, who have backgrounds compatible with the client base targeted by Catalyst. This group was also carefully selected to include individuals from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, who were willing to discuss cultural differences and were aware enough of these issues to offer insightful perspectives. This allowed us to receive high-quality culture-specific feedback at each stage of our project, ensuring that marketed effectively to a range of cultural backgrounds. Each volunteer was motivated to participate by personal interest in the project, usually because the volunteer had a good relationship with English for Life and was eager to help the company move forward.

The feedback group was leveraged at each stage of the process. Initially, they were given a short survey to identify their experiences and needs. During the project, they were consulted at each stage, depending on their personal interests and areas of expertise. Finally, they were invited to participate in a test group to receive the hour-long promotional training and preview the launch of the company. Feedback was solicited
again after the training. Each time feedback was received, it was utilized to make changes and adjustments.

**Project Management**

After identifying client needs, several things needed to happen simultaneously. An effective project management system needed to be created to handle the complexity of the project and the various subcontractors that would be utilized. Everyone involved in the project that needed access to project materials was enrolled in a workgroup using the website Basecamp. This allowed all members of the team to access documents, to-do lists, and calendars. From this virtual office, the work could be coordinated among all parties.

**Steps to Completion**

The five core aspects of the project each involved several steps, many of which had to be undertaken simultaneously. The design and marketing phase of the project needed to be started first, because the subcontracted design specialist needed more time to complete her tasks. This component of the project was complex and could be divided into multiple subcategories. The initial image and design work included corporate branding, personal image and branding, website design, and creation of basic promotional materials. Content generation was also necessary, and included copywriting for the website, a professional photo shoot to provide images for use on the website and social media, the creation of two videos for use on the website and across social media, and the creation of the website itself in its finished form. Meetings were scheduled with subcontractors as necessary and rough deadlines were set (see Timeline below).
Simultaneously to the design phase, the business itself was being planning and organized. A financial plan was created, a marketing plan was drafted, and a partnership agreement was established. An accountant was utilized to assist in the financial organization. These projects were given general deadlines and were worked in as time was available around the other projects, since for the most part, the only parties needed to complete these tasks were Carroll and I.

To create our menu of services, a series of meetings between Carroll and I were held. Finally, we with our web designer to determine how the offerings should be displayed and organized on the website. After this, continued revisions and fine-tuning were done slowly as the project continued.

Developing the training required more steps. Carroll and I met to determine a clearer idea of what would be involved in the training and what materials would be needed, and then I developed the training. Once I had written the training and any materials needed, these were be submitted to the designer for design and layout. The workbook especially needed design and preparation for publication, whether virtually as a PDF or in print. Finally, the training was administered three times: once as a test, and two more times to the public. After the test training, any necessary changes were made.

The final phase of the project was the public launch of the company. This step involved activating social media; finalizing the website and bringing it live; and writing several initial blog posts and scheduling them to be distributed to social media, the website and the mailing list. It also involved planning and scheduling the public presentations of the introductory training, inviting attendees, and announcing the launch
of our business on social media, to our private email lists, and to English for Life's existing email and client list. These tasks were all scheduled for January 2016.

**Initial Timeline**

- Branding and image work (personal and corporate): end of September, 2015
- Basic website design and promotional materials: Mid-October, 2015
- Business Plan and partnership agreement: end of October, 2015
- Copy for website: end of October, 2015
- Services Outlined: end of October, 2015
- Photo shoot: mid-November, 2015
- Copywriting for videos: Mid-November, 2015
- Financial Plan: End of November, 2015
- Training planning meeting: November 21, 2015
- Videos produced: beginning of December, 2015
- Services on website: December 18, 2015
- Website complete with videos uploaded: December 18, 2015
- Marketing Plan: December 18, 2015
- Training Plan due: December 18, 2015
- Invitations to public trainings sent: January 15, 2016
- Training Materials due: January 15, 2016
- Blog posts begin releasing: January 15, 2016
- Social Media tasks complete: January 20, 2016
- Test Training: January 20, 2016
- Two public presentations: Last week in January, 2016
Chapter 4: Results

This project included five main categories of work: the organization of the business and the drafting of a formal business plan; the branding of the company and the creation of key marketing materials (primarily the website); determination of what services would be offered; the creation of the first training, a free promotional training; and finally, a public launch of the business. Before work could begin on these core aspects of the project, client needs assessment had to be planned and a project management system had to be implemented.

Client Needs and Feedback Groups

To ensure that client needs were accurately identified and met, two steps were taken. First, prior research (Beauchamp, 2015) was done before the beginning of this project with the intention of describing these needs. This research also served as a form of market research to be utilized in drafting the business plan. The project analyzed the basic types of trainings offered by a number of existing intercultural training businesses, selected because they seemed to be good examples of the field. Furthermore, they had sufficient materials available for public access to get a good idea of what their training entailed. This research compared what was offered by these companies with what research suggested was most useful and effective. Gaps in the current offerings were identified and a number of suggestions were made to English for Life for meeting these needs and creating product offerings that were, firstly, capable of competing effectively with what was already being offered and, secondarily, capable of meeting client needs in...
a way that would align with what research suggested was effective and necessary. This research, along with current literature, proved very useful and was followed closely, especially when the menu of training services was designed.

Additionally, a feedback group of individuals currently involved in international business was created. Twenty individuals were in this group. Of these, eight participated in every phase of the process, and the remaining people participated only on certain parts or contributed to certain topics of discussion. The purpose of creating this group was to check that the training and products created met client needs as perceived by actual customers, and also that our branding, materials, presentation, and business would be well-received across a variety of cultures.

This group was consistently available throughout the project to review our results and give us professional and cultural feedback. Participants were selected who Carroll or I knew from a variety of contexts: personal friends, professional acquaintances, clients, and other contacts. The criteria we used to select these individuals were professionalism, experience, intercultural background, diversity, and overall familiarity with and understanding of our business. Each individual was someone we knew well whom we trusted to give us honest, insightful advice and who we were confident felt comfortable enough with us to offer disagreement or criticism freely as needed.

Those who agreed to participate offered their support on a voluntary basis, and were motivated by their general interest in our project. At each stage, we invited this group to view our results and offer their insights and opinions. We also checked in with this group frequently when we had questions as to potential problems or disadvantages caused by cultural differences, whether that difference was one of ethnicity, field,
educational level, or class. We chose participants who would ensure that we had access to a variety of perspectives from a wide range of cultural, professional, and personal backgrounds. In this way, we hoped to create a professional image and marketing presence that would cast a broad intercultural appeal. At the least, we hoped to be made aware of potential weaknesses or conflicts of this kind so that we could minimize them.

This group was utilized in several ways. First, two surveys were administered to this group. The first was a short, open-ended survey given early in the development process, asking what challenges they have faced and what training they felt would be most helpful. Later, after the company and training were developed, these same individuals were included in a group that was presented the initial promotional training privately, prior to the public presentation and launch. They were given the opportunity to ask whatever questions they had, about either the training or the company. More detailed feedback was collected after the training was administered. Feedback group participants were asked if they felt that the initial training was helpful and applicable to the situations they face in daily life, and how useful they felt continued work with the company would be to them in this context.

Additionally, this same pool of volunteers was consulted at the completion of each stage of the project. Their feedback was considered and changes were made accordingly as the project was underway. This helped us identify areas of cultural difference we were previously unaware of, and mitigate issues immediately before they caused any significant challenges.

All participants in this group were promised total anonymity outside of the group. With the exception of the final test presentation, the members of the group were, for the
most part, not aware of each other. All participants knew they were part of a feedback
group but did not always know who the other participants were or what part they were
playing. With the exception of the initial survey, comments and feedback were solicited
through informal one-on-one interviews. Carroll or I spoke with each individual
privately regarding each subject, making notes of the key points to be shared between us
later. Participants were aware that their feedback would be shared in a general way with
Catalyst subcontractors as needed and used in the development of the business. Other
than this, participants were promised that their feedback would be kept private. For the
test presentation, feedback was solicited and given publicly to the group or privately after
the event, according to the preference of the participant.

**Project Management and Organization**

This was a complex project involving many tasks that needed to be in process
simultaneously. Carroll and I needed to be able to oversee and coordinate each step, and
various subcontractors were involved at different stages. Information sharing was crucial
to allow everyone to be able to do their job with maximum ease and efficiency. Since
everyone was working virtually, communication was also an issue. Because of this,
creating an effective system of project management was crucial to the successful
completion of the project.

The core of our project management system was an account on Basecamp.com.
This website is a virtual workspace where projects can be planned, managed,
coordinated, and organized. We used a combination of this website and Google Apps,
especially Google Drive and Docs, to provide project management, coordination,
communication, and file sharing for the entire project. Basecamp and Drive were integrated so that they communicated and linked to each other.

Within Basecamp, I created to-do lists and assigned tasks to specific individuals. I created forums and message boards where each specific task or issue could be discussed with all individuals involved. All important dates and deadlines were marked on the project calendar and then shared to each individual's personal calendar. Communication between us and between our consultants took place primarily in the message boards dedicated to each step of the project. The website automatically emails updates to each participant, who can either log on to the website or reply directly through their own email, using their computer or their phone. This allowed us to maintain constant contact without interrupting our other tasks and responsibilities. It also allowed each participant to stay fully involved, because all conversations were visible to all members who were assigned to each task group.

File sharing was integrated between Basecamp and Google Apps/Drive so that files hosted on Google could be linked within conversations and the organization systems provided by Basecamp. Scheduling tasks were also handled through Basecamp, but integrated with each individual's private Google calendar. In this way, Basecamp created the framework that allowed me to oversee, coordinate, and organize each step of the process.

Google Apps was crucially important to us as well. All documents and text were originally drafted in Google Docs, and then transferred as needed to other software. We did this because Google Docs allows files to be shared easily, various people can work in the same document simultaneously, and the comment feature is very easy to use and does
not interfere with the work in process. This made communication and teamwork extremely efficient and easy for all text. For example, Carroll and I often workshopped documents in Drive, working virtually and writing simultaneously into the documents, communicating with each other during the process via the comment options in Google Docs. We found this system to be so organized and useful that we actually began using it during in-person meetings as well, keeping both our computers open and accessible and using the same work process, just talking directly instead of using the comment fields.

We used Google Sheets to create the majority of our spreadsheets, at least initially, due to the ease of file sharing. Later, our accountant transferred some of the files into Excel because it was a more powerful software. Google Forms were used for surveys and information collection. Google Drive was used as the master file sharing method; all Catalyst documents were located on Drive in a shared folder, accessible by both Carroll and me. Subcontractors could easily be given access to specific documents through Google, which automatically notifies the recipient of shared access. Shared documents necessary for the projects are linked to, and therefore also accessible through, Basecamp.

Each individual task began with a meeting (either in-person, via Skype, or a combination of the two) between all responsible parties to establish core guidelines, boundaries, and goals for each task. After this meeting, production began and each person worked independently. Once each person had completed their portion of the task, it was submitted for Carroll, me, and any other key players involved to revise and approve all work. This ensured that the style and voice remained consistent across all material and that all parties were in agreement regarding content, style, organization, and
other factors. All of this was accomplished utilizing the file sharing and comment options available on Google Drive, Google Docs, Basecamp, and, as a last resort, email. Once we were satisfied with the initial results, feedback group members were consulted as appropriate, comments were summarized and presented to those involved in that task either via a meeting or Basecamp, and any necessary changes were made.

**Business Organization**

This project began with a series of meetings between Carroll and me to determine the concept of the business. During this time, we discussed what our corporate identity would be, what kind of trainings we wanted to offer and where we wanted to start, and a general sense of how we wanted to proceed. This allowed us to clarify our direction, identity, and essential marketing angle.

Three components of the business organization had to be developed independently before the plan could be written: the partnership agreement, the financial plan, and the marketing plan. Each of these was created in a joint meeting between Carroll and me.

The original partnership agreement was negotiated with the first 1-3 years in mind. We included the caveat that it would be re-evaluated annually, as certain key elements were likely to change as the business grows. The current plan includes three primary categories of agreements regarding decision making, money, and dissolution. Decision making includes negotiations, responsibilities, and tie-breaking agreements. Money issues include future salaries, capital investments, and payment of subcontractors. Both of these categories were fairly easy to outline. When we actually began to discuss the details of dissolution, however, it was apparent that more legal knowledge was
necessary to create a final policy. Initial policies were drafted that give an overview of the intentions of the partners and will be reviewed in more detail at a future point with a lawyer.

The financial plan was drafted in a meeting between Carroll, me, and our accountant and financial advisor. We listed expenses and created a monthly budget that projected our operating costs. We determined which expenses and other resources could be shared with English for Life (EFL) for the first one to three years. Fortunately for Catalyst, there were many resources that English for Life is already paying for that could be shared with Catalyst with no additional cost or inconvenience to EFL. Carroll offered to continue to maintain these expenses through EFL, with this agreement to be reevaluated yearly. Such expenses included Mailchimp, internet service at the main office, a client management system, and various other subscription services.

The marketing plan was drafted next. This plan defines our marketing strategy and describes the key components and goals. Events such as conferences and local trade shows are identified, networking approaches are described, and key organizations and individuals are listed. We also planned a marketing calendar to organize the various tasks and events for the first year. Projects and events that we felt were important but outside the scope of what we could realistically accomplish within the first year are also listed. After the original concept was fully developed and these three components were compiled, we were ready to write the business plan.

**Business plan.** The business plan begins with an Executive Summary, which serves as a summary of the key points of the rest of plan and an overview of the company (see Appendix A, p. 2). After the Executive Summary, the business plan includes a
company description, a description of services, an overview of the marketing plan, a description of the management and organization, and an overview of the financial plan, as well as various appendixes.

Chapter 1: Company Description gives an overview of the development of Catalyst Intercultural, its association with English for Life Academy, and its intended future growth. This section includes a history, a mission statement, a business philosophy, and identifies the legal form of operation. It also includes a list of goals and objectives, including both subjective goals and quantifiable financial goals. Finally, there is a Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats analysis of Catalyst (see Appendix A, Business Plan, pp. 5-7).

Chapter 2: Services includes brief descriptions of each of the main categories of services or trainings Catalyst Intercultural intends to offer as well as initial pricing structures. These services include general intercultural skills training, global and virtual teams trainings, a global leadership program, expatriate relocation training, business English training, academic campus assessments, workshops for training best practices when working with international students, English language and American academic culture trainings for international students, and intercultural trainings for domestic students. Finally, this chapter includes a brief summary of the pricing structure Catalyst intends to utilize (see Appendix A, Business Plan, pp. 8-9).

Chapter 3: Marketing begins with an overview of market research. This section looks first at the local area and identifies data that demonstrates why Greenville is a promising location for a company such as Catalyst. Next, it looks at the field of intercultural training in general, explaining that intercultural skills training has been
identified as an area of need by Human Resources personnel in various national surveys and includes some statistics demonstrating this. After that, this chapter compares the services Catalyst will offer to what is offered by existing companies and explains how Catalyst will both leverage systems that work and fill gaps left by other companies. Next, a table organizes the features and benefits of the primary services Catalyst will offer. Potential customers are identified and listed, and the competition is analyzed. This section evaluates several companies serving as examples of known competition and provides a basic analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats of each. Finally, it includes an overview of our marketing and promotion plan and an analysis of pricing, location, and distribution features.

Next, as the Marketing chapter continues, a strategy to address competition is overviewed. Marketing channels to be utilized for promotion are identified and listed. The pricing strategy and advantages are discussed, and the business location is revisited in terms of marketing advantages offered. Finally, distribution channels are listed and discussed (see Appendix A, Business Plan, pp. 10-16).

Chapter 4: Management and Organization outlines the business structure. This chapter begins with a general description of the physical structure of Catalyst, explaining that the business operates virtually. Next, the partnership agreement is outlined, and finally, a description of support and advisory services is provided (see Appendix A, Business Plan, pp. 17-19).

Finally, Appendices include samples of client feedback, a copy of the financial plan and projections, Carroll's resume, my resume, brief descriptions of sample projects,
Design Phase: Website and Marketing

The design phase of the project was the most time-intensive, extensive part of the project. This phase included several major tasks. The first of these was to create the look of the business. This process included branding and corporate identity, professional/personal image development, a professional photoshoot, and selection of images for use on the website and social media. Next, the content had to be created. This step included drafting the copy for the website, the creation of two promotional videos, and the design of the website itself. Throughout this process, our feedback group was consulted regularly and changes were made based on criticisms and suggestions they offered.

Marketing strategy. Before we could begin to create marketing materials, we had to define what strategy we would use to speak to our audience. As we reviewed the research that explained best practices for marketing, especially that of Godin (2009) and Forleo (2015), we decided that the most effective approach would have two prongs: first, we needed to create a clear description of our ideal client, and second, we needed to adopt a storytelling approach. As Godin and Forleo both explain, focusing on a highly specific client allows the marketing to be targeted, and a storytelling approach helps these clients identify personally with the marketing by illustrating with real-world examples.

Describing our ideal client was fairly simple. We have hoped to work with academic institutions, individuals, and commercial organizations. However, out of these three categories of potential clients, commercial organizations have been the most likely
to be able and willing to contract our services. Because of this, they were the client we chose to focus on. Within this category, we specifically want to work with companies that have an international presence. This could be because they subcontract to larger, multi-national firms, because they work virtually in other countries, and/or because they themselves do work abroad. All of these types of organizations have been operating in the Greenville area and this type of industry has been growing rapidly in this region as well. This gave us confidence that we could market effectively within our own geographic area; however, we did not want to limit our marketing to be specific to Greenville because many of the firms have operated in more than one area and working with them might involve individuals working elsewhere. Therefore, we did not emphasize location in our descriptions.

Within these firms, the people we have hoped to work with included executives and leaders who need improved intercultural skills to operate effectively in their daily work. However, we were aware that those responsible for actually hiring us to deliver services would most likely not be these individuals. Instead, we would probably be hired by personnel in human resources (HR). Because of this, we determined that our marketing needed to effectively speak to both the individuals we hoped to serve and the HR personnel that work with them. We were also aware that our ideal client could potentially come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds.

To ensure we were communicating effectively with this group, we included both human resources personnel and international executives in our feedback group, and made sure that we had individuals with backgrounds from both these areas who came from multiple cultures as well. For example, we included individuals with strong business and
human resources backgrounds from Chile, Brazil, Germany, the U.S., and the U.K. in our group.

After identifying our ideal clients, our marketing needed to tell stories that spoke effectively to them. To accomplish this, we outlined pain points—problem areas where the clients feel frustration or are suffering some form of pain—that we thought our target audience would easily identify with. We thought back through countless conversations we had had with past clients who met our description. We listed problems we had dealt with, complaints we heard, and frustrations they had shared. We also compiled a list of anecdotes from our real experience with these types of clients and based our copy on them. We identified statistics and other data that supported complaints and problems we knew past clients had faced and used this information to create infographics for the website. Our videos open with the retelling of three anecdotal stories. Other marketing materials list successful sample projects. All of this type of material was based on our experiences with actual clients and work we had actually done, and all the material we chose mirrored the type of client and work we hope to do in the future.

Feedback we received later regarding this aspect of our marketing was extremely positive when we shared our marketing materials with the individuals in our feedback group. "I feel like you are telling the story of my life," "I deal with this kind of situation every day," and "The stories you told really resonated with me" were a few of the comments we received—regardless of the cultural background of the individual. This was exactly the response we were looking for. However, our response from human resources professionals was more mixed. Some aspects received very positive feedback and others received criticism. In general, these professionals wanted more concrete,
quantifiable data regarding our accomplishments and our specific skills. They also liked our storytelling approach, but wanted briefer, more formal examples as well. We tried to balance the feedback we received by creating a new introductory brochure that incorporates exactly this sort of information in an abbreviated, direct format. This brochure will replace the introductory letter we had previously been using for human resources connections, and was used as part of our launch later. We also made extensive notes about how we could improve in the future as we created new documents.

**Creating the "look."** Since Catalyst is a new company, nothing existed to determine the look and image of the organization. All of this had to be developed. This ranged from the color scheme Catalyst would use, to the business logo, to the overall appearance and feel of materials. It also included the professional appearance we would adopt in promotional images. To ensure that the "look" of the company would effectively market across cultures, we enlisted the services of multiple image and branding coaches from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Working with these consultants, the branding materials were created and other design decisions were made.

An initial meeting between Carroll, me, and our contracted designer was scheduled for the beginning of September. The goal of this meeting was to make general design decisions and ensure that our efforts would be well-coordinated moving forward. Following this meeting, the designer began work on the branding for the company, which included the logo, colors, design choices, and other artistic or stylistic considerations. This resulted in a template for the overall look of the website, with more extensive design decisions to be made later, basic design templates for social media pages, and the creation of business cards, letterheads, and other basic materials that utilized the logo. Finally, a
professional photo shoot was planned to provide images for use on social media and the website.

**Branding and corporate identity.** We hired a Brazilian consultant living in the U.S. to help us create our branding and design and maintain our website. Our original meeting with her was one of the first steps we took in the process of creating the marketing materials for Catalyst.

To prepare for the meeting, we created a list of keywords and important phrases, using Google Analytics and LinkedIn for the majority of our research. These keywords served two functions: first, to help our designer understand the language and tone of the website as well as some of the technical terminology; second, to provide a basis for the future creation of the website's search engine optimization. We also gathered some brief materials regarding our intended services and any materials (such as the Global Competencies Inventory) we would be using. Most of these came from past work we had done and our old website. These materials served the same function as the keywords and analytics. Finally, we organized applicable sections of the notes from our original conceptual meetings into easily-accessible documents for the designer to use.

During the initial meeting, we looked over these materials and discussed the image we wanted to create for our potential clients. We wanted a brand that conveyed two sides: first, we wanted to create the impression of being intelligent, competent, successful, professional, and expert. Simultaneously, we wanted to reflect that we are young, enthusiastic, "cool," and fun to work with. Finally, the image needed to be modern and up-to-date. Our designer was pleased we had already put so much thought
into what we wanted and were able to provide her with so much detail and material to begin working with immediately.

After a week, she had prepared a "first look" presentation for us (see Appendix B, Branding First Look). The initial design colors selected were blue and orange. Blue was meant to reflect a professional, corporate image, while orange was chosen to signify the more fun and engaging personality we wanted to convey. Design elements were incorporated to suggest the idea of movement and blending. The consultant selected three main keywords to utilize in the design process: "global," "connect," and "agent" (Ramos, 2015). Figure 1 illustrates the original branding design suggestion:

![Original logo design](image)

Figure 1: Original logo design

We liked the selection of colors and approved of the designers' keyword choices (see Appendix B, Branding First Look). We also were enthusiastic about the globe with the stand, the idea of the other elements melding and moving with the globe, and the way
the font she designed for the name echoed the image. However, we felt that the image in
general reminded us too much of science classes in schools and in general had too
scientific and educational of a feel. We also felt that the circular nature of the design
appealed both to us personally, to a more feminine approach, and to some cultures very
well—especially South American. However, we felt that it would not appeal to corporate
culture, more linear thinkers, or more direct and linear cultures, such as European and
U.S. American. We also felt that the balance of formality to informality was shifted too
far towards the informal, for the same reasons. Because of this, we were concerned that
while some would find the design fun, personable, and approachable, it would lose appeal
for those potential clients who were looking for intelligent, professional, and competent
consultants. In other words, the design spoke to us from a relationship-oriented
perspective, but began to lose its effectiveness from a more task-oriented perspective.

We met with our design consultant again, and she redid the image (see Appendix
C, Catalyst Branding). The second time, she removed the lines joining the balls to the
globe and added a mosaic effect inside the globe to give it a more masculine and linear
edge. She adjusted the font style to make everything a little more squared, and then
changed the colors to include more blue. She felt this gave a more business-like feel to
the presentation. At the same time, retaining less orange actually made it stand out more,
which created a focal point and gave the impression of movement, fun, and change. We
agreed and were extremely happy with the second image. We also requested that she
remove the two outer balls. After much thought, we felt like they distracted from the
core logo and made the image too complicated. Without them, it seemed cleaner and
more focused. The final logo is shown below:
As part of this initial branding, we also created letterhead and business cards. There was also a good deal of discussion centering around the small icons that were used on these documents and several places on the website. A great deal of care was involved in selecting icons that reflected the message while avoiding the pitfalls we encountered with the design of the logo. These icons, and any text phrases associated with them, were surprisingly difficult to choose. Achieving a balance between serious and fun, task-oriented and linear, and more relationship-oriented and indirect proved to be a recurring challenge. Also, avoiding images that reminded us and other American associates of elementary and high school and the American educational system was difficult, especially because of cultural differences with our designer. Since she was Brazilian, she did not have the same background experiences with the colors and images as we did. Trying to explain why they reminded us of science class in school was a small challenge. Eventually, however, we were able to clarify the issue and appropriate icons were selected.
The top of the letterhead included the logo, centered. The bottom included the icons and the website, with the words "training, coaching, consulting."

Figure 3: Bottom of letterhead

The conversation at this point continued on our online platform and Basecamp, and it centered on the business card design. We discussed various details including how to include all the needed information without cluttering the design, and what titles we should use on the cards. We chose the title "Chief Catalyst" because we felt that it was more fun and interesting than simply "lead trainer" or "director" and also because we wanted a title that was broad enough that we would not need to change it if our job descriptions changed as the company grew. To us, "Chief Catalyst" conveyed the ideas that we were both in leadership roles, that we were change agents, and that we were active in our positions. We included "training, coaching, and consulting" on the back side of the card to make clear the business function. The front and back of the final business card design are shown below:
Once we were happy with the results, we showed both our business card design and other branding results to our feedback group. The comments we received were consistent: most people loved the design and the information on the cards. Everyone agreed that the icons and logo were appropriate and that the cards were nicely designed.
and effective. Feedback was positive regarding the color choices, fonts, and general look. The comments we received echoed our predictions about cultural responses, especially regarding color balance and the gap between task-orientation and relationship-orientation. When we showed participants the original designs and asked their opinions about the changes, the responses were in line with what we expected, as well, and it was agreed that the final results we created were better than the originals.

We received interesting feedback from a Chilean participant, however. This individual was a psychologist who worked in human resources. His feedback was centered on our choice of titles: "Chief Catalyst." He told us that "Chief" is a common job title in Chile and many other Latin American countries, and a low-ranking position, below manager. We explained that we meant "chief" in the same sense that CEO means "chief executive officer." Our Chilean advisor responded that, on business cards, a CEO would never write out the entire term. Such an executive would be identified by the initials only. Since that rank has a clearly understood meaning, in that context, "chief" is an acceptable use. Since we were creating a new title without a clear definition, in our case, "chief" would diminish our status and respectability and hamper our ability to deal on a level playing field with potential clients. We consulted with other individuals in our feedback group directly about this issue, and found that the response was consistent, especially among Latin Americans. Since we had already ordered the printed cards before this issue came to our attention, we decided to use the rest of those cards, but change the title in other places and on future printings of the cards (for further discussion of this issue, see Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions).
Consultations with international image consultants. While this design work was being done, Carroll and I both worked independently with a group of stylists to understand better how to present ourselves personally for corporate and cross-cultural work. The information we gained from our conversations with this group was utilized to select wardrobe options for the photographs on the website and other marketing materials, and what was worn during video filming, as well as inform us personally so that we could be more effective in our presentation in the future.

This group included individuals from our feedback group who had been invited to participate specifically in this part of the project as well as whatever other areas they had an interest in. The group included a personal shopper and image consultant from Slovenia, an artist from Columbia, and a corporate consultant from the U.S. and the U.K. We selected these individuals for three primary reasons. First, this grouping broadly covers the three geographic areas with which we do most of our work: Europe, the U.S., and South America. Second, these individuals know us well and have worked with us in the past, so they were very aware of our business and personalities, understood well what we were trying to accomplish, and were enthusiastic about helping in this way. Finally, all three were skilled in this area in general, despite the fact that they had very different personal styles. The difference in perspectives offered by each was enlightening.

We had made the decision to seek out help in this way because we already suspected that our personal presentation would not be appealing to a corporate audience, since we both come from small business and academic backgrounds. We knew we needed to look more "professional," but we were not sure how best to accomplish that or to ensure that our look translated effectively across multiple cultures. That this would be
a challenge was evident from the beginning, largely because the degree of formality and informality preferred by each cultural group.

Our European consultant encouraged much more formality and much less color, significantly preferring blacks and grays. She also preferred plain clothing of high quality with a very tailored fit. In general, an understated style was encouraged, with simple clothing, hair, makeup, and accessories as well. Interestingly enough, she did not have a preference or consideration as to what length of skirt was appropriate, but did have strong feelings about appropriate shirt length. In general, shirts needed to be longer and cover more than the other two preferred, but skirts could be much shorter.

The South American consultant enjoyed color and bold patterns. Eye-catching, creative combinations were favored, and larger jewelry was considered sophisticated. Her perspective was more flexible concerning lengths and fits.

Our U.S. American consultant provided the link between the two extremes. While she did have strong opinions on how much exposed leg was acceptable and was far more conservative in general than the South American consultant, she also approved more color if used in what she deemed an appropriate manner. Her approach to the issue was to preserve our personal styles—which, for both of us, tended to lean more towards the colorful and unusual—by blending bright colors and unique pieces with more conservative cuts and pieces.

Utilizing the blended options suggested by the U.S./U.K. consultant, we were able to create outfits and looks that appealed to both the European consultant and the South American consultant as well as ourselves, and should prove acceptable in corporate culture. No one individual would approve of the entire outfit: the South American
consultant found the conservative pieces "boring" and the European consultant found the brighter additions "a bit too much," but all could agree that the end result was tasteful and appealing in the larger picture as well as being appropriate in a corporate context. The final feedback we received from each could be summarized, "Well, I would never wear that, but I think it looks good on you."

Additional feedback came from several Brazilian members of our feedback group. I was already aware that Brazilian culture placed a high priority on cleanliness and personal grooming. However, several Brazilian members commented that we needed to take more time to do our nails, eyebrows, and makeup. We were told these were three details that were crucial to maintaining a professional appearance. Additionally, it was emphasized that we needed to take care to ensure that our socks or hose and shoes were very carefully coordinated, especially in terms of color. All shirts needed to be ironed. Perfume must be worn and carefully selected as well.

**Professional photo shoot.** One of the tasks we took on with the group of stylists was to plan outfits, hair, and makeup to be used in the photo shoot and videos later. The photo shoot was important because this yielded images for use on the website and on social media. We had originally planned to finish with a larger variety of shots, but due to weather and other complications, we did most of the shoot indoors in an impromptu set created from the photographer's living room and kept the same basic outfits the majority of the time.

Once we completed the shoot and the photographer was done with the images, we selected our favorites for use on the website and consulted our feedback group. One of the key photos we wanted was a long, thin image to use as a header on our biography
section of the "about" page of the website. It quickly became apparent that there would be no agreement on which images were best. Overall, the feedback group preferred indoor images to outdoors, but whether the picture should be more serious or more "fun" was very divided along cultural and professional lines. Three images emerged as equal frontrunners, but none had the wider orientation we needed for the website layout.

Carroll had the idea to combine three square pictures into the design space and use a marker effect to add name labels to make the image more interesting. Our designer created an image to fit this request, and the response from the feedback group to this new concept was overwhelmingly positive. The following photo, which will appear on the About page of the website, illustrates the final selection and serves as an example of the personal style we created:

![Photo selected for the About page on the website](image)

Figure 6: Photo selected for the About page on the website

We also utilized the website Photofeeler.com to evaluate the effectiveness of our photos to a general audience. This website allows users to vote on photos in three categories: personal, dating, and professional. Each category is evaluated based on three elements. In the professional category, these three are competent, likeable, and influential. Voters rank the photo in each of these elements along a scale that ranges
from "No" to "Very." By rating others' photos, users gain points, and points can be used to purchase an evaluation of their own photos. Once approximately 80 votes have been reached, the results are compiled and the photos are scored. These ratings are fairly accurate due to the large number of votes each photo receives.

We uploaded a variety of photos into this website to check for their effectiveness. We learned that light, color, and the facial expression and personality of the person in the photo were very influential in gaining positive feedback. The feedback from this website did not necessarily match what we received when we talked to individuals in our feedback group, but it still offered another perspective. It can be assumed that the majority of users of the Photofeeler website are U.S. American or at least from English speaking countries, so cultural difference may partially account for the wide range of feedback we received. Personal preference and the feedback group's more personal knowledge of both Carroll and me as individuals and our business might also account for differences in responses.

Based on the results we received, we chose a few images to use as social media profile photos and confirmed our selections for the website. We balanced the feedback we received from all these different sources and chose the photos that seemed to generate the most positive results across the board.

**Creating the Content.** Once we had a clear idea of how we wanted our business to look and what the image we would project would be, it was time to begin developing actual content. At this phase of the project, the elements that needed development included the copy that would appear on the website, the promotional videos, and the complete design of the website itself.
**Drafting copy.** While our designer was working on the creation of the actual website, we needed to prepare the copy. The biggest challenge for us at this point was to communicate with potential clients both effectively and briefly. We felt that because our future clients would most likely be primarily human resources staff in a corporate context, they would have limited time, so brevity and clarity were crucial. We also felt that it was important to make our copy less academic and more concrete, appealing to specific problems and demonstrating that clear solutions existed, which we would be able to provide.

Responsibility for writing the copy for the website was divided equally between Carroll and me. To begin this process, a meeting was planned for early in September, to decide what marketing angle should be utilized and how the copy should generally sound, as well as what details should be included. A specific list of copy needed was made, and these writing tasks were divided between Carroll and me based on what it was felt each person could draft more quickly and easily. Deadlines were assigned and work began.

Also, certain information was identified that we would prefer to show as an infographic. In these cases, copy was written that could be utilized, but the copy was referred to the designer to translate into visuals. She was given permission to alter the text as necessary, pulling out phrases, sections, or ideas to use. For example, the following image on our website was chosen to be translated visually. This information started as a text block compiled by Carroll, but was changed into an infographic by the designer at our request:
After this meeting, writing began. Carroll and I drafted entirely new copy as well as utilizing some materials we had already accumulated. We recycled copy that we had previously created for English for Life and for marketing materials, salvaging whatever we felt could be effectively reused. For some time previously, Carroll and I had also been compiling a series of Google documents in which we had been entering phrases, keywords, and sections of texts that we felt would be useful for future copy as we
encountered them or found ourselves using them in meetings and discussions. We utilized these documents for our copy as well.

Sometimes, different sections on the same page of the website were written by different people. Because of this, close communication was necessary to insure that the style and voice remained consistent and that both parties were in agreement as to what each section should say. Once each person completed their portion of the copy, the other person revised and approved all work.

Each of us created an initial draft of each piece separately, and then shared our work with the other using Google Documents. We each revised the copy provided by the other, making comments and editing the text. Then the original author did another revision, and, once prepared, the fourth draft was workshopped jointly in real time, using Google Documents. In this way, the final drafts of the copy for each website page were created and consistency in voice and style was maintained throughout.

During this process, we would periodically send segments of text to our feedback group for comment. We consistently got the feedback that our writing was too academic, too long, too complex, and too vague. To help ourselves counteract this, we began to use the Flesch-Kincaid Readability Test before offering sections to the feedback group. This test rates writing on grade level and ease of understanding, based on sentence structure, grammar, and other factors. We utilized a website, https://readability-score.com/, to learn our rankings quickly and easily. We tried to lower the grade level and raise the readability by using less formal academic language, but with moderate success. Once we felt like we had achieved a reasonable level of readability based on this scale, we turned over our documents to our feedback group for additional comments. This helped to
reduce the feedback regarding difficulty and to generally gain more positive results. However, keeping the language simple and clear remained a challenge for us throughout the writing process.

*Videos.* We made the decision to hire a professional videographer to handle the production of our primary video for the homepage of the website as well as creating a short promotional video we could use in a variety of places. From the beginning, we felt that video was an important element to include on the website. Originally, we had planned to make three short videos of 2-3 minutes in length each, and to make them ourselves while working with our designer. Midway through the fall, however, we had the opportunity to take advantage of a special promotional offer to work with a videographer we knew from online connections.

The potential savings of the offer was highly influential in our decision to work with this individual and to do the video immediately. The package included an animated introduction and a soundtrack which we would own, giving us the potential long-term benefit that we could reuse these two important elements in all future videos we made. We felt that having a highly professional video as an introduction to our website would increase the appeal of our marketing. We also valued the opportunity to work closely with and learn more about video production from a specialist. The introduction and knowledge gained could potentially be used in the future to create more marketing videos on our own. Finally, the package offer included something very similar to what we had already decided we wanted to do. Instead of three short videos, this package would include one longer introductory video and one brief promotional advertisement video. Based on these factors, we made the decision to hire the videographer.
The video production process began with a Skype meeting between Carroll, our designer, the videographer, and me. We discussed our plans and desires, and the videographer asked a number of questions to become familiar with our business and our target clients. She explained the process and gave us access to an online project management portal that contained various worksheets and instructional videos. She and our designer discussed technical details and the creative aspects of production.

One week after the online meeting, Carroll and I met to plan our video production. We selected soundtrack elements from a database provided by the videographer. In choosing the music, we were looking for pieces that were upbeat and optimistic sounding, as culturally neutral as possible, and intense but not overwhelming. We also selected stock photos and video footage from a similar database, choosing visuals that reflected diversity, growth, and global business.

After selecting these items, we needed to create the script. We recycled copy from our website and promotional materials again, and created a very rough draft working jointly. I revised our rough draft into the first draft of our script and passed it on to Carroll for review. Carroll made some minor modifications.

We spent our first filming day creating test footage. We downloaded a teleprompter application and learned to use it. We worked with our designer to create a functional set and to manage the light. We experimented with various sound and video options. All of this was sent to the videographer for review. She responded with suggestions and we scheduled a real shoot for one week later.

While doing this test shoot, we came to realize that our script was not working well, and was too lengthy and dense. Carroll took the script to our feedback group and
reworked it initially based on their commentary, which mostly consisted of suggestions for clarification, all of which were in alignment with our own opinions. Using Google Documents, we workshopped the script extensively over the next week and made extensive changes. By the day of the real shoot, we had a better script.

The real shoot progressed without difficulty. We made some additional small modifications to our script as we worked. During the test shoot, we had already worked through most issues with hair, makeup, and wardrobe, so when these sorts of issues arose, we were able to deal with them quickly and easily. The filming went well, and the amount of time we had invested in perfecting our set paid off too, because we were able to adapt easily to changing light and weather conditions. The final shoot took an entire day, but we were satisfied with the results. At the end of the day, all materials were submitted to the videographer to be made into our final videos.

The videos were returned to us for our approval. We suggested some basic edits (such as the correction of typos in the text) and engaged in a lengthy discussion about whether our message was clear. We were concerned that our videos seemed more geared toward marketing relocation services than training services. We showed the videos to our feedback group as well as several other friends and colleagues familiar with the industry. Most feedback was overwhelmingly positive but several people did mention that the product offered was a little unclear, and it seemed like we were offering something more similar to relocation services than training.

We conferred with the videographer and ultimately concluded that adding two text screens to indirectly clarify the product, near the beginning of the video, would be helpful. We disliked the effect of the text at that point in our video, but felt that the
importance of clearing up our service offering—training instead of relocation services—
was significant enough to merit the change. After that, we showed the video to our
feedback group again, and received a universally positive response.

In total, two videos were completed. The longer video was posted on the
homepage of our website and the shorter video was saved to use as a promotional
advertisement later. The first video can be viewed at the top right of
http://catalystintercultural.com/. The second can be viewed on our Facebook page,
https://www.facebook.com/catalystintercultural/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel, where it is
pinned to the header under the tab labeled "Watch Video."

**Website.** The ultimate goal of the marketing and design phases was to create a
professional and appealing website. All the copy we wrote and the videos we made
contributed to this goal. The first step of the web design was to create a general layout.
Later, the designer would fill in the details and upload the copy we had created. To
accomplish this, we met with our designer. At this point, our designer had some initial
glimpses of the website. These were templates that showed the basic layout, headings,
colors, and graphics. The designer filled in the spaces on these templates with stock
images and text she excerpted from the notes we had given her previously, at the earlier
branding meeting.

We worked together to look at what she had provided us, suggest changes, and
further clarify what we wanted. Our goal at this point was to get a clear idea of what the
final website design would look like. Carroll and I provided her with a selection of links
to websites that had design layouts we liked and felt were effective. During the meeting,
we viewed the sites with her and discussed our likes and dislikes, while she took notes.
We also provided her with access to the current English for Life website and gave her permission to draw from that site as needed. Finally, we worked together to come up with a list of pages and a basic outline of what content would be on each page. We had already compiled this information in our earlier meetings regarding the copywriting and the overall concept. The meeting with the designer took place after the copywriting organization meeting between Carroll and me but before we began work on the copy. This allowed the designer to work with us on our projects separately but simultaneously.

Within a few weeks, the designer returned a basic design layout for each page, utilizing Basecamp. Carroll and I evaluated each page independently and then met together to compare our notes and to discuss. Our decisions and requests were relayed back to the designer via Basecamp. After this, the designer created a secondary draft of each page and resubmitted it to us, again via Basecamp. Carroll and I reviewed the second design draft and made further recommendations. A third draft was created, and a meeting was held to discuss the design in detail. After this meeting, the basic design plan was finalized and results were delivered via Basecamp. Further modification to the design would depend on the copy we would provide.

Once we were satisfied with our copywriting, we submitted drafts to the designer, again using Basecamp. Our designer read the copy and suggested any needed modifications to make it fit the website layout better. Either Carroll or I, whoever was available first, completed these changes for each page and notified the designer. Then we began the process of merging our copy with the design. Our designer cut the copy as needed to fit in the design, changing things freely, and turned some lengthy text segments into more graphics and visuals. We met with her again in person to review these
changes, clarify details as needed, and suggest further modifications. Each individual completed the tasks assigned to them, and all revisions were once again submitted.

Once this primary revision process was completed, one final in-person meeting was held to review all the modifications. At this point, all changes were small and detail-oriented. This version was approved as our working version of the website, to be used until the entire website project was ready for a final revision and final complete approval.

The website was then shared with members of our feedback group. Feedback was mostly positive. The design was universally accepted. The primary critique of our copy was that it was still too long, dense, and academic. Several individuals said they still were not sure what our organization offered. We made note of this feedback and planned further revisions. It was also interesting to note that U.S. American colleagues seemed to prefer extremely short, simple, and clear text, while colleagues from South America were more interested in design elements and overall impressions. European colleagues offered a mix of opinions.

Carroll and I both began working directly on the website utilizing Wordpress, our hosting service, making whatever non-technical revisions we had the skill to make. We both worked on the website as we had time around other projects. Whenever we received feedback commentary from our group, we tried to accommodate their suggestions. More complex changes were referred to the designer via Basecamp. Finally, after several weeks of this process, Carroll and I held a final meeting to thoroughly review the website together one last time. After this, we asked our designer to make the website live.

**Website walkthrough.** The culmination of our design phase work is our website, catalystintercultural.com. The page was designed and maintained with wordpress.com.
Minor changes to the design and content can be done by both Carroll and me, and major changes can be made by the designer.

There are five main pages: Home, About, Work with Us, Resources, and Contact. There is also a page that can be accessed through the Work with Us page that offers a menu of training services. Each page has a site header that never changes. This feature includes an opt-in box at the very top of every page, which allows users to join our mailing list and receive updates, information about events, and newsletters. There are permanent links to each of the five main pages, and the Catalyst logo header is prominently displayed.

At the bottom of each page, there is a permanent footer. This includes, on the left, a list of recent posts from our blog on our Resources page. In the middle is our contact information. To the right is a sitemap with links to each of the five main pages. Finally, across the very bottom, is our usual footer with the icons, our copyright information, and our designer's logo. The header and footer are shown below:

Figure 8: Screenshot of catalystintercultural.com header
Figure 9: Screenshot of catalystintercultural.com footer

The website is linked to Mailchimp, an email list client. If the opt-in box on the header is clicked, the user will be redirected to a welcome letter explaining what they are signing up for, and will be prompted to insert their email address and name.

Once the user has successfully given their information, they will be redirected to another page explaining that they will receive our free Intercultural Toolkit. This is a free training resource that they can download. (For more information about the resource, see the training section of this chapter.) This page will also advise the user that they need to confirm their subscription to be added to our list and to receive the resource. To complete this step they need to check their email and confirm by clicking a link in an email sent automatically by Mailchimp.

Once they have clicked this link, they will be added to our list and receive the resource and other materials. They will receive one last introductory email welcoming them and confirming their addition to the list. This is all handled automatically by Mailchimp.
Our home page opens with our main promotional video and our slogans. Our slogans are on the right. These include a line we have been using repeatedly as our main slogan: "successful communication across cultures means successful business around the world." Under this line is a secondary slogan: "Solve real world problems. Propel your business forward. Create positive change." On the left is our video. Clicking it will allow it to play directly in the browser. Under this section is our mission statement: "We build powerful global leaders by improving intercultural communication and facilitating successful international transitions." Beneath this are three boxes that list each of our client groups: organizations, individuals, and academic. Under each heading is a brief list of services offered to each client group.

If you continue scrolling down, you will find a large box advertising our free intercultural toolkit and offering another opt-in opportunity. If this box is clicked, it will initialize the same automatic opt-in response as the box in the header. Under this box, there are three more sections. One advertises a free webinar that we hope to host in the future; right now, the link activates the opt-in sequence for the free resource. The middle section links to our Work with Us page, and the section on the right links to our Resources page. Each section is comprised of a brief description along with the link, as shown below:
At the bottom of the homepage is a scrolling text box that contains one of several testimonials. This feature can be found in different places on every page. The testimonials are set to change every 30 seconds. The final feature is a section that encourages visitors to get in touch and contains links to our social media channels and email.

The main goal of the home page is to introduce the company and generate enough interest in the visitors that they stay on our page and continue exploring. Ultimately, we want them to click one of the opt-in boxes that are offered in multiple places across the site and sign up for our mailing list so that we have continued opportunities to present our marketing materials, or to contact us directly for information about our services.

The next page is the About page. The function of this page is to introduce Carroll and me, and provide a brief biography and information about our qualifications. The
page opens with a quote from Andy Molinsky, and then moves into a biographical section. There is an introductory paragraph that lists some prior companies Catalyst has performed services for. Following this is an image header with photos of Carroll and me.

After this, the biographies begin. The page is divided in half vertically, with the biographies arranges in columns, one for Carroll and one for me. Each biography includes five sections. The first section is the title, which lists our names, titles, and primary formal education qualifications as well as icons to link to our social media. Each of the following three sections is marked with an appropriate icon and includes a paragraph addressing the topic. The topics of each section are training experience, academic background, and training style or approach. The final portion of the biography is a separated by a box and includes a bulleted list of specific job responsibilities or specializations, as shown in Figure 11:

Figure 11: Screenshot of the biography section
Following the biographies is a short section with more company information. This section includes adjectives former clients have used to describe Carroll and me, with appropriate icons to add a visual component. The point of including this is to highlight what sets us apart as trainers. Next, there are brief paragraphs that quickly overview the company's goals and approach. Finally, there is a box linking to our menu of services and another opt-in box to receive the free resource. Figure 12 shows the icons chosen:

Figure 12: Screenshot of the bottom of the About page

Our Work With Us page is designed to give more information about the need for intercultural training and provide a link to the page outlining our menu of services. We arranged this page this way because we created the services menu after the rest of the website, and wanted it to be easily changed and/or removed without affecting the general website design. We also wanted to encourage our visitors to view more information.
before they looked at detailed training information. This setup may change in the future, but the Work With Us page, and the information on it, will remain in some form. We also considered placing the menu of services information directly on the Work With Us page, but decided against that because of the increase in length. We felt it was better to keep the pages short and quick to read.

The Work With Us page features a right sidebar. This sidebar starts with another opt-in box, followed by a search box that allows the user to search the site. After this, there is a box displaying our most recent three blog posts with links. Finally, there is another scrolling testimonial box, again set to change every 60 seconds.

The main text of this page is set up as a series of questions and answers, each marked by a visual icon. Instead of text, the first answer is an infographic overviewing some statistics related to the importance of intercultural skills. After that, the questions are answered by brief text. Finally, there is a large orange box linking to our services menu. This page can be seen in Figure 13:

![Figure 13: Screenshot of Work With Us page](image-url)
The next main page is our Resources page. This page is mostly empty now, because we have not existed long enough to have compiled an extensive library of resources. We see this as an ongoing project where we intend to routinely post new resources. It is comprised of four sections: our blog, other articles, podcasts, and books/other. Each section title is listed, offset visually in a blue header. After each header is a brief description. Currently, the headers for other articles, podcasts, and books have a note saying that they are coming soon. The header for the blog is already active, and new blogs are being posted approximately every two weeks. Figure 14 shows the Resources page, and Figure 15 is an example of a blog article:

Figure 14: Screenshot of the Resources page
On the right hand side of the page, there is the same sidebar utilized in the Work With Us page, and at the bottom of the page there is an opt-in box for the free resource. The blog page follows essentially the same format.

The final page of the main site navigation is a Contact page. This page is basic, offering an email contact form and offering a free 15-minute Skype call to discuss training options with prospective clients. Elsewhere on the website are frequent email icons linking directly the visitor's email client.

In the future, we intend to add a section that offers specific, concrete details about work we have done in the past. We are undecided at this point if this section will be part of the About or Work With Us pages, or will be a separate page entirely. We are also undecided if we will add the page to the main menu or link to it through an existing page. This page will include such information as a list of countries and companies we have
worked with, example projects we have done, and more anecdotal stories of work with past clients. We may also include more testimonials in this section. Another potential future change is reorienting the way the Work With Us page and the menu of services interact. We may add a link directly to the menu of services from the main site navigation rather than having to link through the About or Work With Us pages.

**Services Offered**

We felt well-prepared to make the decisions about which services Catalyst should offer. First, I had previously completed a research project that centered around market research exploring the current industry standards (Beauchamp, 2015). Second, Carroll and I had undertaken multiple long meetings prior to the beginning of this project to fully conceptualize the business and create a general overview of what kind of training we wanted to offer. We compiled extensive notes on past projects and clients we had worked with, identifying problem areas, complaints, and frustrations we felt training could help resolve. We noted what had been successful and what needed improvement. This information was leveraged to help us develop our marketing approach, as well. Third, we consistently consulted our feedback group, and the information they gave us was very helpful.

The previous research (Beauchamp, 2015) attempted to paint a general picture of basic current trends in intercultural training. This project reviewed the websites of a range of existing successful intercultural training companies and looked closely at their approaches. Data regarding the type, length, and content of their trainings was compiled and compared with research regarding best practices and industry standards. From this,
we were able to generate some basic guidelines Catalyst could apply to developing our
list of services.

**Overall organization.** One very popular approach we observed other companies
using was to create a basic framework into which almost any topic can be
plugged. Companies utilizing this approach created modules that could be rearranged
and combined in a wide variety of ways to create specialized programs. Repeatedly
companies seemed to have a basic list of topics that they recycled between
training offerings, combining the same material in various ways to effectively address
each specialized focus. From this basic approach, the companies were able to offer a
large selection of training or coaching.

This approach offers a key advantage because it saves time and
effort. Previously, English for Life (EFL) was custom-developing each program for each
individual client from the ground up. Some content could be recycled, but the training
format or framework had to be recreated for each new client. Even recycled content had
to be reworked. Also, these types of offerings were difficult to quote financially,
because until the program was developed, it was unclear how much time and other
resources would be required to create it.

Utilizing a framework with interchangeable modules is efficient while still
allowing customization. Once created, the modules can be recombined and reused with
much less additional work. The information within each can be tweaked or adjusted
as needed, but it is not necessary to "reinvent the wheel" every time, like English for Life
was doing previously. Furthermore, if a client has very specific needs that require
extensive customization, it is easy to create only one or two completely new and
customized modules, while reusing any applicable modules that were previously created to complete the training.

We had observed both from our previous experience and from our conversations with our feedback group that the same needs show up repeatedly. This makes sense, because while every situation is unique, the core challenge we are addressing is the same: the need to function and communicate effectively across cultural boundaries. This observation reinforces the logic of organizing the services in this way.

Additionally, this type of organization system makes it easier to facilitate sales. The overall framework makes it easy to describe the training in terms of length and structure. The client can easily visualize how the training will work. It is simple to list and describe such trainings on the website.

Offering quotes is much faster and easier because prices can be decided ahead of time. A basic framework can be given a flat fee, and specialized modules that have a higher cost can simply be added to this original fee. For example, a one-day training might cost $2000 for a group. This fee might include any 3-4 modules of the client's choice. However, if one of the modules that the client wants includes a metric like the Global Competencies Inventory that is expensive to administer, an additional fee might be added per person to offset that extra cost. The system would work the same way if additional one-on-one services were offered.

This system can be compared to a menu in a restaurant, especially restaurants offering American-style breakfasts. The patron can order a main plate for a certain cost. Each plate includes a certain number of items. For example, the Large Breakfast might include two meats, two eggs, a bread, and an additional entree. The patron can
then choose between bacon, ground sausage patties, or sausage links; any style of eggs; biscuits, toast, or English muffins; and oatmeal, grits, or pancakes. Substitutions of equal value and usually allowed and easily requested. If the patron wants to add anything to this plate, he or she can do so for an additional fee. This system is easy to understand, easy to use, and easy to price.

For all of these reasons, we chose to utilize an approach similar to this, and to create a menu of basic services which we could then customize as needed for each client. The next step was to determine what lengths and general structure of trainings were the most popular and effective.

**General structure.** According to the previous research (Beauchamp, 2015), the most common length of training time offered was one day. Two-day trainings were often offered, and half-day trainings were common in blended approaches. Blending might combine a half-day of standard group training with further self-paced virtual training or coaching. In virtual training, briefer lecture-style webinars and seminars were common. These were often combined with one-hour group coaching, group question-and-answer sessions, or involvement in some form of online community following the initial training. Longer-term e-mail support and/or online community involvement was commonly offered as well.

Through this research, it was discovered that leadership training was a slight departure from the general training model described above (Beauchamp, 2015). Most leadership-focused trainings utilized a more coaching-oriented approach, or perhaps blending coaching and training. They commonly utilized a standardized assessment to analyze an individual's leadership abilities and then provide coaching to that individual to
improve their performance. Some programs utilized a shorter training for general intercultural skills, and then followed a coaching format for the remainder of the program. One-on-one coaching usually occurred over a period of 3-6 months and was divided into three or six one-hour sessions. These sessions commonly occur virtually. Catalyst decided to utilize this structure for coaching, and to make this available as both a distinct service offering and as an add-on or module within the general framework.

Once we had determined that we wanted to create a framework like this, we then had to determine which content we wanted to include as standard offerings. From the previous research (Beauchamp, 2015), we noted that the basic topics offered are generally the same across companies: expatriate-focused coaching, general intercultural communication skills, country specific, communication skills, language skills, management/leadership skills and coaching, and team/relationship building. Country-specific trainings were very popular.

**Content.** Current research in the field suggests some guidelines that can be followed, as well. Horan (1976) reports that skill-focused training is helpful, as are trainings that develop more open-minded attitudes. Horan outlines learning objectives that include development of positive attitudes about target cultures, intercultural communication skills, a deeper understanding of the original culture of the participant, awareness of likely cultural challenges, and personal stress and change management (pp. 28-30). Even when training is culture-specific, it should focus in these areas (p. 30). Kaufmann, Engelzou, and Gárcia-Gallego (2013) recommended using assessment tools to identify gaps in individual learners' understandings. Then, a blended approach,
including the assessment, generalized training, and coaching can be used to address these
gaps (pp. 28-29).

Catalyst planned training to address these issues as well as offer additional
services. General intercultural skills training will be offered, with various modifications
possible to include emphasis on country or culture-specific skills, communication skills,
change management, and attitude development. Specific training addressing the needs of
global or virtual teams will also be available. Assessments can be added to these
trainings, as can coaching. Language training and expatriate orientations are additional
optional services. All of these trainings are marketed to corporate, individual, and
organizational audiences.

Furthermore, we decided to create a Global Leadership Certification program.
This program basically combines the most important parts of the other offerings into a
single high-level training with a very strong one-on-one coaching component. This type
of training would be targeted at small groups or individual clients, and recommended for
leaders in an organization. The point of creating this program was to have a pre-
structured way to offer more intensive training. We decided to offer a certificate of
completion because we felt that potential clients who had made the time and energy
investment in this level of training would like something to show for their efforts.

For academic clients, we noticed specific patterns in the programs we had
developed in the past for local universities. We realized that we were commonly
performing four specific tasks, so we chose these four services as our offerings.

First, we will offer campus assessments. This includes visiting campuses,
meeting with faculty, staff, and students, and evaluating how effective and "friendly" the
campus is for international students or programs. After this, we make specific recommendations for improvement. Coaching or training can be added to this offering as needed. Second, we offer workshops for faculty and staff that must work with international students. These include awareness and skills training to improve understanding and communication. Third, we offer training for international students in English language and academic culture. These types of workshops are proactive problem-solving to help international students learn the specific skills they need to be successful in a U.S. university environment, improve communication, and understand the specific facets of cultural difference that are likely to create challenges for them. Finally, we offer training for domestic students who will be working closely with international students (like student mentors, tutors, or Resident Assistants) or are preparing to study abroad.

**Presentation of services (website).** Once we had a general idea of how we planned to structure our training and what content we would offer, we needed to decide how to present this information to our clients. It was generally observed (Beauchamp, 2015) that many companies' websites were set up in such a way that it was very easy for the client to visualize what the training programs the company offered looked like: how they are laid out, what the training covers, and who the training is designed for. The client was shown exactly what was being offered, why, to whom, how it would benefit them, what would be learned, and how it worked. Then, the potential client simply selected the training that most interested them to learn more. The client could then contact the company directly about that service to learn more or discuss specifics. Once again, this is like choosing from a menu at a restaurant. It creates
options that are easy to understand, fast to read, and very clear and specific, regardless of the topic (or how vague the topic is in reality).

We wanted to use a similar method to present our offerings. Our goals were to create something quick to read and easy to understand. We also wanted our potential clients to be able to effortlessly identify which trainings were options for them and not waste time reading through offerings that didn't apply. We wanted to include enough information that clients could visualize the program, but not so much that it appeared restrictive or to lack customization.

After meeting with our designer, we decided to include a menu of offerings on our website. We also offered free 15-minute Skype calls to discuss our offerings and see if our company is a good fit for the client, which would offer us an opportunity to explain the offerings in more detail and to better understand how we can meet our clients' needs.

Website visitors can access the menu of services from the bottom of the Work With Us page. There is a link in an attention-grabbing orange box that advertises our current offerings. Visitors who click this box will be taken to a separate sub-page that is dedicated to our menu of services.

One of our chief concerns in creating the service menu was to make something easy and fast to read. We wanted our potential clients to be able to instantly understand the organization and effortlessly find trainings that fit their needs. To accomplish this, we utilized two design techniques. First, we organized the training offerings into three categories: organizations, individuals, and academic. This immediately eliminates the need for potential visitors to read two-thirds of the page. If the visitor is a university
professor seeking help with an international student program, for example, they can skip directly to the academic service category to find what they need. However, this still leaves the option for the visitor to continue browsing other services if they wish.

We had the option to hide all the training titles and only show the three category names, but we chose to leave the offering titles visible so that visitors can see what is under each category before they click on it. We hoped that this would also help to improve their browsing experience, making everything even more clear and easy to follow. Figure 16 demonstrates the categories and their drop down menus:

Under the Organizations category, there are five trainings offered: intercultural skills training with optional country specific training, global teams training or virtual teams training, the global leadership certificate program, expatriate relocation training, and business English courses. The Individuals category includes
English language coaching, business coaching for entrepreneurs, and the global leadership certificate program. For academic clients, we will offer campus assessments, best practices workshops for faculty and staff, English and academic culture training for international students, and training for domestic students.

Clicking on any option will open a drop-down menu that reveals more details of that particular training. We chose this design element because it allowed us to present a large quantity of information while still keeping the screen clear and uncluttered. Under each tab, there are four headings that summarize the key features of that training. *Who* describes who is the most likely to benefit from that training, *Time* describes the format and training time. *Looks Like* is designed to give an overview of what participants can expect to experience or learn in the training. *Delivery* describes the means of delivery, whether that is online, blended, or face-to-face. Each training is broken down in this way.

For example, if Global Teams Training is selected, visitors will learn that this training is for those who want to focus on effective communication and create deeper understanding and better teamwork across cultural or geographic difference. It is a one-day training that includes one one-on-one coaching session per participant and a team-leader debriefing session. Before the session, participants take a formal assessment. The training will have two parts: one will focus on intercultural skill building and the other on team building for their specific team. The coaching and debriefing will take place after the group training. Delivery can be face-to-face, online, or blended. See Figure 17 for an example of this drop-down menu:
Pricing. The final component of organizing our menu of services was to determine the pricing of each training. This was challenging because we weren't sure what was fair to ask. We wanted to price ourselves within the range both nationally and locally. Our goal was not to compete with larger organizations that might be able to send trainers in for less, but to ask for a fair price that would allow us to leverage our advantage of being local. To determine pricing, we spoke with multiple Human Resources participants in our feedback group. We also checked in with other local organizations offering different types of leadership, executive, or team building training or coaching. Finally, we spoke with various independent intercultural trainers who were willing to offer us guidance in this regard. Each organization or individual we spoke with was aware of our project and happy to offer us mentoring.

Our initial prices were set as follows. General intercultural skills trainings range from $1750 to $4900, depending on the duration of the training and can include up to 20
participants. Team trainings cost $7000 for up to ten individuals. Global Leadership Certification costs $10,000 for a group of five, or $2,800 per individual participant. Relocation trainings vary depending on the supplemental services requested, but a half-day of training plus three one-on-one coaching sessions costs $1750 for a group, with an additional fee of $300/person, or $780 per individual. Local orientation services cost $100/hour and include interpretation/translation services in Spanish, Portuguese, French, or German. Business English training costs $65/hour, with discounts available based on packages purchased or in combination with other services.

It is assumed that these prices will change as we become more familiar with our market and learn what works and what doesn't. At this point, our goal was simply to create a ballpark figure we can work from. We assume we will negotiate exact pricing with our clients per training. We also assume that if we are doing sub-contracting work for another training organization, we will need separate, lower rates. Additionally, we hope to offer our first few trainings at a discount in exchange for feedback and testimonials or references and the ability to use that training as an example of what we can accomplish.

Training

Once the website was developed, we had a solid business and marketing plan in place, and we had clarified what services we would offer, it was time to develop an initial training. We knew that we wanted this training to be available both in-person and on-line, and we planned to offer it for free. It would be available on our website as a means of enticing people to join our mailing list so that we could reach out to them with future marketing materials, and we wanted to offer the presentation several times locally
to organizations and individuals in our community. We hoped to be able to present it to target individuals at some of the local international corporations as a free learning opportunity, so that they could have a way to sample our training style and content. Using it in this way would also create additional networking opportunities. Finally, we wanted this training to be something that could easily be expanded or re-appropriated for a different use later.

To accomplish these goals, whatever was developed needed to be short and versatile. It needed to have enough depth to provide useful, applicable information to the learner, but also be basic enough to leave them wanting more. We wanted to provide real value and generate real interest, while avoiding giving away too much for free.

After discussing the different options, we decided on a strategy. The training would involve two components. First, there would be a longer workbook that covered the topic in more depth and which could be downloaded online. Second, there would be a face-to-face training covering more or less the same material, but which would be briefer. The two would be designed to be used together or to stand alone. This allowed us to meet all our primary objectives, and created something versatile enough that it could be easily reused later if we chose.

Once we had decided on a general strategy, I had to choose topics and develop the content. I focused on the workbook first, because it would be the more comprehensive and in-depth of the two parts. I wanted content that was accessible to those with no international experience but still useful to individuals with extensive experience. I also wanted content that would heighten awareness of the need for intercultural training. It
was also important to me that the content provided real, practical knowledge the learners could immediately begin applying to their personal situations.

To meet these criteria, I decided to cover three main points. First, I wanted to introduce the learners to a better definition of what culture really is. I knew from my prior training experience that as long as the learner only thought of culture as including elements such as art, music, food, and clothing, the learner was unlikely to look deeper or strive for a greater understanding. In other words, a very surface understanding of culture was, in my experience, not useful for enhancing communication or effectiveness. Therefore, it seemed important to me to help learners develop a better definition. Also, I wanted to help learners avoid the trap of thinking that culture only matters in international relations or when dealing with people who are from a different country. Again, in my experience, this perspective is not useful and leads to stereotyping and avoidant or defensive behavior. I wanted learners to understand that culture is deep, personal, and multilayered. Multiple cultures exist within a single country or even city, communities, and families. I wanted learners to start viewing their interactions with others through a lens that was more aware of difference than previously. This was especially important because of the nature of this training. Since this training would be presented to various groups and would be open to the public, it would not be possible to predict what the background of the learners would be. It could not be counted upon that learners would have significant international experience, or would be able to recognize important elements of their own experience. In order to make the crucial step of applying the information to their own life, learners needed to understand that cultural differences can be found anywhere and at work in even the most common interactions. In this way,
I hoped by expanding the definition of culture, each participant would be able to successfully identify examples of these types of issues in their own lives. This technique had proven successful for me in previous trainings, so I was confident it would work in this context also.

Second, I wanted my learners to begin to shift their definitions of communication. I wanted learners to know that multiple communication styles exist and that there is no "right" way to communicate that excludes other styles. I also wanted them to be aware that these styles are somewhat predictable by country so that they could begin applying this information in a practical way in their daily lives, at least becoming more aware of the differences between them and their international coworkers (or anyone from a different cultural background).

So, the first two learning objectives concerned raising awareness and deepening understanding so that the learner was more able to recognize difference. I also wanted the learner to perceive that difference is not always big and threatening; it is something they already deal successfully with on a daily basis without realizing it, so they already have some "intercultural skills." This was intended to provide a starting place and help learners feel more comfortable in addressing this topic. The final learning objective of the first two parts of the training was for learners to understand that this is a large topic and that what they would learn in a brief introductory training such as this one is only a small piece of the puzzle. To become truly proficient, they would need to continue studying (hopefully by contracting us to provide such additional training).

The third main topic was the most practical. Since the first two deal with awareness, attitudes, and perceptions, I wanted the third part of the training to be
more practical and concrete. I wanted to teach something learners could begin using immediately in their daily lives. For this section, I chose to explore one communication style continuum in more detail and discuss practical, actionable strategies for implementing what learners had discovered. The workbook contained an expanded version of this application section, walking learners through an easy-to-remember system for approaching differences in communication.

**Workbook.** The workbook was designed specifically for self-study and utilized exercises that an individual could realistically complete alone. We also decided to include a printable poster summarizing the key points of the training. I wrote the text for the book and outlined the general flow, then sent the text to Carroll for edits. Carroll proofread the text and suggested a few small changes. I revised the copy and then sent a final draft to our designer, who created the graphic layout. The designer and I worked together to make adjustments and changes as necessary to create a final document that was attractive, easy to read, and had a good flow and pace of information.

The workbook has seven chapters (see Appendix D, Workbook). Chapter one, "What is culture and why does it matter?" explores a deeper definition of culture and looks at the various layers that can exist within each person, from micro-elements like "dog owner" or "foodie," moving to macro-elements like nationality and ethnicity (p. 3). The goal of this chapter is to help the learner understand that culture is all-pervasive and exists everywhere, even where they may have never thought of it before. Chapter two, "The problem with culture" is a short chapter focusing on explaining how culture can create conflict, and emphasizing that often disagreements are about deeper issues than they may seem to be about at first glance (p. 5).
Chapter three, "Communicating across difference" develops a deeper understanding of communication, explaining that communication includes more than language and words (see Appendix D, Workbook, p. 6). Communication also includes the way people perceive, interpret, and react to the world. Chapter four, "Communication styles," explains that communication can be analyzed by using continuums, which vary somewhat predictably by country (p. 7).

Chapter five, "Direct vs. indirect communication: What does it mean?," looks more closely at this one continuum, using it as an example of what these continuums can reveal about communication (see Appendix D, Workbook, p. 8). This chapter includes a description of what each style of communication looks like (p. 8). There is an infographic showing where several example countries fall on this continuum (p. 9). Three case studies are included to help learners practice identifying direct and indirect communication (p. 9). All case studies and examples used in this training were based on real-life situations I had coached past clients through. The learner is given the opportunity to provide an answer first, and then correct answers are given and explained (p. 10). Following this is a quiz I designed to help the learner apply the information to themselves (p. 11).

Chapter six, "The secret to dealing with direct and indirect communicators," offers advice to help facilitate more effective communication with each style (see Appendix D, Workbook, p. 12). Chapter seven, "4 steps to communicating effectively, with anyone, anywhere" is a key chapter (p. 13). It introduces an acronym I designed to help learners easily remember four steps to better communication. This acronym creates a framework and approach that is followed through the end of the book.
S.T.O.P. is introduced as an infographic first (see Appendix D, Workbook, p. 13), then explained in detail on the next page (p. 14). S stands for "Slow down and step back," and encourages learners to take the time to evaluate situations more closely rather than depending on their instant reactions. T represents "Try it on," encourages users to practice empathy. This step suggests that learning to shift perspective temporarily can reveal useful aspects of a situation that would previously have gone unnoticed. O represents "Optimize your toolkit," and explains that having more tools in your personal communication "toolkit" allows you to choose what approach is most effective in each situation, and reminds learners that the tool used is selected by conscious choice. Finally, P stands for "Patience and persistence" and reminds learners that these two qualities are necessary for success. Because S.T.O.P. represents specific actions the user can take, it was selected to be the basis of the printable poster, which accompanies the workbook (see Appendix E, Poster).

Starting on page 16, several case-study based exercises walk the learner through implementing this S.T.O.P. process (see Appendix D, Workbook). For these exercises, the case studies given in chapter five are reused. This was intended to give learners the opportunity to interact more deeply with material they have already begun thinking about, so that the information is more accessible and familiar to them. The first case study is given, S.T.O.P. is applied, and each step is fully explained (pp. 15-16). The second case study is also drawn from chapter 5, but this time is told with more detail to provide learners with more information to work with. This time, learners are asked to attempt their own explanation first. S.T.O.P is written out for learners to help them remember the process they have learned, and space is provided after each step to allow
them to complete the steps on their own (pp. 17-18). On page 19, suggested answers are given. Finally, on page 21, learners are asked to think of an example from their own lives. Once again, they are guided through the process, rethinking what happened to them in order to potentially arrive at better results.

Finally, chapter 7, "Advantages of Improving your Intercultural Communication" focuses on reminding learners why these skills are important (see Appendix D, Workbook, p. 23). The final page of the workbook is a marketing call and a call to action inviting learners to visit the Catalyst website to learn more (p. 24).

The information in the workbook is organized to flow logically and slowly lead the learner deeper into the material, step by step. Each chapter includes brief text that explains the main concept of that chapter. Usually this is only one or two paragraphs. Several other features continue to lead the reader through the workbook. There are multiple question and answer blocks, which attempt to predict and answer the key questions the learner should be asking (see Appendix D, Workbook, p. 3). Sometimes the answers are provided; other times, the learner is given an opportunity to interact with the material by providing their own answers. At the beginning, more answers are given for the learner. As the workbook progresses, these question and answer boxes become exercises.

Many pages include a "Key Concept" box, illustrated with a key icon, which summarize the key point of that chapter or segment (see Appendix D, Workbook, p. 3). Most chapters also include at least one "Go Deeper" box, which takes the information presented in the chapter one step deeper. These boxes are orange and include an icon of a figure diving (p. 3).
Occasionally, examples are provided to demonstrate how the material might work in real life. These are found in boxes titled "Example" and marked by an orange icon (see Appendix D, Workbook, p. 4). Because this information is so easily used to stereotype or classify, at several points the learner is cautioned to think more carefully or reminded to stay aware of certain elements. This information is contained grouped under a blue "Caution!" heading, usually as part of the sidebar (p. 6).

Several important concepts have been translated into infographics (see Appendix D, Workbook). For example, several communication continuums are illustrated on page 7. Direct and indirect communicators are identified with an icon on page 8. A chart illustrating how countries fall on the direct-indirect communication continuum is found on page 9. On page 14, an infographic lays out the S.T.O.P. acronym, which I created to help learners understand and remember four crucial steps to successful intercultural communication.

Exercises that allow the learner to interact with the material are provided throughout; however, the exercises increase in depth as the workbook progresses. The most important exercises begin on page 9 (see Appendix D, Workbook) with several case studies and build until the end of the book, when learners are walked through solving some example intercultural conflicts (pp. 15-20). At the end, they asked to provide one of their own (p. 21).

**Live Training.** The next major project was to develop the in-person introductory training. This training was intended to be a sample of what Catalyst Intercultural could teach or offer to potential clients, not a full intercultural communication training. The learning goals of the training were to provide an introduction to
intercultural communication; help learners develop an improved understanding of what culture is and why it is important; and acquire greater awareness and a few simple skills that will help them communicate more effectively across difference. The marketing goals were to introduce ourselves and the company, provide a sample of our training, offer real value to the community, create a selling opportunity, and to network.

The primary challenge of developing the training was time. We wanted to be able to deliver the training during lunches, so it was important to keep it short – less than an hour total. That severely limited the amount of information we could hope to cover. We wanted the training to more or less follow the workbook, presenting the same basic material for the same basic reasons. While the workbook was intended to be more comprehensive, we still wanted to cover the same core points in the live training. This was extremely difficult.

I developed a training plan for a 50-minute presentation (see Appendix F, Training Plan). The training defined culture, briefly explained why it is more pervasive and complex than many people realize, and discussed why understanding culture is important. It looked at how culture can contribute to interpersonal conflict, and explained how communication and culture intersect.

The next phase of the training was to explore different communication styles. Communication styles were defined and explained, and how communication can operate across culturally-defined continuums was demonstrated. Next, one communication style difference was examined in more detail: direct vs. indirect communication. Suggestions were given to improve communication. Finally,
learners were asked to think about a personal example and evaluate how what they learned could be applied.

Several activities were included in the training (see Appendix F, Training Plan). These activities were blended into the lecture components so lecture and activity was mixed. To open the training by helping learners visualize the need for intercultural training and to provide some kinesthetic activity, all participants were asked to stand. A list of cultural experiences was given, and learners were asked to sit when an attribute that fit them was named (for example: "Have you ever lived abroad?" or "Does your team at work include people from other cultural backgrounds?"). The goal of this activity was to illustrate that everyone can benefit by improving their intercultural skills.

For the next activity, participants were quickly grouped. Chart paper had been hung on the walls before the training. The participants were asked to list on the papers as many different cultural groups as they could think of, focusing on groups that they belonged to. The intent of this exercise was to show that the number of cultures and co-cultures an individual could potentially belong to is vast, and to illustrate concretely how each culture will have different expectations for communication, behavior, and values.

The third activity was the most important. The class was presented with a case study describing an interaction between a direct and indirect communicator that was not going well. Then the participants were divided into the same groups. Each group was assigned a character from the case study, and given the task of creating three specific guidelines or action steps that character could take to create more successful communication and bring the situation to a better end result. Once again, chart paper was
posted on the walls and groups were instructed to write their suggestions on the paper. After the exercise was complete, the answers were shared and additional suggestions were offered by the Catalyst trainer. This exercise was important because it was a full application of the target material.

The training was wrapped up with one final exercise. Participants were instructed to think of a personal situation they had experienced, and then work with a partner to come up with a personal action plan that they could implement in the future to address such situations when they arise again.

We originally intended to present the training three times. The first time, we presented it to members of our feedback group, as the culmination of our work with this group. Approximately 20 people attended, and all gave extensive feedback afterwards. Recognizing that feedback and critique methods vary widely by culture, we took extra steps to make sure everyone felt comfortable and confident offering their opinions. To be certain that we received the full feedback everyone had to offer, we solicited commentary in a wide range of ways. We invited people to offer comments on paper in response to a close-ended survey form, on paper in response to a variety of open-ended questions, and verbally in a group discussion after the presentation. We also invited feedback through private emails or conversations after the event. We personally approached individuals who were hesitant to offer criticism and made it clear that their opinions were welcome and helpful to us. In this way, we accumulated extensive feedback and a tremendous amount of helpful information.

Basically, our participants enjoyed the training. Feedback was more or less consistent across cultural lines, with only a few distinct separations. More direct, task-
oriented cultures preferred the lecture components while relationship-oriented cultures enjoyed the activities. Everyone agreed (including us) that time was a serious challenge, and due to this, suggested reducing the amount of small group activities – even the cultural groups that really enjoyed them. While everyone universally felt that the content was well-chosen, applicable, and useful, participants agreed that, due to time constraints, the discussion of culture at the beginning should probably be shortened. It was also pointed out that the link between the culture portion of the training and the communication portion of the training needed to be clarified. Most participants saw these as two totally distinct types of training and were not clear how they related.

Feedback was positive regarding our presentation style in general, and our only consistent suggestion was to be even more confident and assertive than we already were. Our agenda and objectives were not clear enough; all participants stressed this. This information was not surprising to us as we had hurried through our introduction in order to save time; however, according to the feedback, this was not a wise training decision. The task-oriented cultures wanted the agenda printed out and on the table before the training began. A few issues with my Prezi presentation were pointed out. These were all due to issues with the projector, but highlighted the obvious need to have all technology functioning well before the presentation, and to check each slide to make sure it is being accurately portrayed.

Finally, two major areas received universal criticism. First, everyone very much enjoyed the stories and examples we shared during the training, but they wanted many more. The more stories we could tell, the better people connected with the material and the more personal they felt it was. Also, they felt these stories were the best evidence of
our expertise that we could offer. When we told stories, participants reported that they felt connected to us, understood, and respectful of our knowledge. When we focused on data or theoretical information, participants reported that they felt distant from the material. They seemed to feel that the more abstract ideas were not necessarily applicable to them personally. The stories helped make the theories more concrete and real to them. The importance of a story-telling approach was stressed strongly by all participants, regardless of cultural, professional, or personal background.

The second major area of criticism was in regard to our sales and marketing. Participants felt it was far too weak. They felt that as teachers and trainers we did well, but to sell our product, we needed significant improvement. We were encouraged to devote significantly more time both during the introduction and after the close of the training to much more aggressive selling. Again, this was true across all personal variables. We had been hesitant to sell too aggressively or to devote too much time to this during our training in fear of being too pushy or "sellsy," but our participants assured us that intensifying our marketing would have the opposite effect, making us seem more professional and knowledgeable.

We had intended to deliver the training two more times to the public as part of our official launch. However, after practicing, we decided that we needed to alter our training plan. We wanted to make changes both in response to the feedback we had received and to improve our management of the time. Additionally, we wanted to spend more time honing our marketing approach before we presented ourselves to the community and potential clients. Also, we had unexpected problems establishing exact dates when rooms would be available to give our presentation. Due to these issues,
we decided to postpone the two public trainings by six weeks, and now plan to present them in June.

**Launch Plan**

The final step in this project was to plan a formal public launch. This launch took place in two arenas: online and in Greenville, SC. English for Life, Carroll, and I all have a large number of contacts who are not based locally. This necessitated an online launch, because we wanted to reach out to our entire existing client base and establish new, direct relationships with Catalyst. However, our primary long-term marketing focus will be on the international businesses that operate in the South Carolina Upstate. Because of this, we needed a local launch, as well.

**Online.** The online portion of the launch focused on Facebook, LinkedIn, the website, and our personal networks. First, the website was brought live and fully visible to the public. Previously, it been shielded behind an "under construction" page. It was connected to a Mailchimp server and auto-response emails were written for all contact opportunities through the website. The free workbook was uploaded, and a campaign was established in Mailchimp to handle the delivery of the workbook and to begin compiling an email list. Additionally, the blogging component of the website was prepared to receive future blogs, and several already existing blogs were moved from the English For Life website to the Catalyst website. The blogs were scheduled to be released every two weeks, thereby providing consistent blogging until July before new posts would be needed.

A company page was created in Facebook. The shorter promotional video was uploaded to a YouTube channel so that it would be accessible across social media. The
video was then uploaded into Facebook itself, and a permanent link to YouTube was pinned to the top of the Facebook page. The video itself was included in a post introducing Catalyst and inviting people to visit the website, sign up for notification of future events, and receive the free resource. In the future, new blog posts will be added to the Facebook page as well, and a regular posting schedule will be established.

A corporate page was also created in LinkedIn. The same video was uploaded and an introduction was posted. Another post was made to invite followers to visit the website and get the free resource. Carroll and I both reviewed our personal networks and made sure we had made connections with all significant contacts. We also updated our profiles to reflect Catalyst. LinkedIn will be an ongoing networking tool and over time, we hope to expand our LinkedIn company page to match what we are doing on Facebook.

Carroll and I both joined several groups in both Facebook and LinkedIn. Participation in these groups will be part of the ongoing networking plan for Catalyst.

Additionally, private messages and emails were sent to the English for Life mailing list and all personal contacts and prior clients of both Carroll and me. These emails included personal notes where appropriate, an explanation of the new business project, a PDF introduction to Catalyst, and the usual invitation to visit the website and join the mailing list.

**Local.** Our local launch plans centered on a few key events that would involve the public and networking with local businesses. We planned our launch to coincide with Upstate International Month. This is a yearly event sponsored by the city and the International Center of the Upstate (Upstate International), a local
nonprofit. The International Month features a month-long calendar of events designed to
appeal to and celebrate the international community of the Greenville area, including
international businesses and the expatriate community. This was a strategic time for us to
introduce our company because it created an appropriate time and place for people to
learn about Catalyst. It also created opportunities to generate publicity by sponsoring
events, thereby gaining free wide-coverage marketing. Also, it allowed us to network
with many of the international businesses in our area.

We participated heavily in two events. The first was an International Breakfast,
which kicked off the month. This event was sponsored by a variety of local
companies. Operating simultaneously as English for Life and Catalyst, we cooperated
with Upstate International and helped host the event. The second event, International
Trivia Night, we hosted on our own. A local bookstore volunteered to co-sponsor the
event by providing space and food in their café. Upstate International included the event
among the Upstate International Month official events. We invited our contact list and
many new people showed up. We hosted a trivia competition with prizes donated by
Michelin, Draexelmaier, and Fluor. Because we were able to use co-sponsors, these
events cost us mainly effort and required a small resource investment.

Our main goal of hosting these events was to connect with the businesses and
organizations that are potential clients. They might or might not attend the individual
events, but they were highly likely to sponsor events. The key benefit for us was to be
included among the event sponsors. Our name would appear alongside theirs in
published materials and on the website, and we would have the opportunity to network
with them at organizational meetings.
We also benefited from the free publicity and advertising offered by Upstate International, who included lists of sponsors and who promoted the events. Each company that sponsored events was listed in the published materials distributed by the organization and received a temporary profile on their website. We wanted our logo to be associated with a prominent local event and established organization, and to appear alongside the logos of other large and influential companies. Even if no one contacted us as a direct result of our participation in these events, our participation would begin to create the impression of a successful, established, reputable businesses and begin to generate name recognition.

Our key local launch event will be our training. We will offer the training for free to the public and to local businesses at least two different times and locations. Two local organizations have offered to sponsor the events, providing space to give the trainings in exchange for acknowledgement of their contribution. The first is Find Great People, a local personnel and human resources management company. The head of business development has participated in our feedback group on matters regarding sales, marketing, contact building, and networking, and he has offered us mentoring. The second organization is Greenville Forward, a local business development organization with whom we have worked in the past. We will hold one training at lunch and one at the cocktail hour after work to give two time options to our participants.

We originally planned these two public trainings for the end of April. However, due to scheduling conflicts and the decision to revise our training after our beta presentation to our feedback group, we have decided to postpone the public training. We wanted to postpone by about a month. This would give us time to make the revisions
and allow an appropriate amount of advanced notice for potential participants. After more discussion, though, we decided to postpone until the beginning of June. We felt that potential participants with children would be less likely to be free to attend during the last part of May, because of the end of the school year.

Once the new dates are finalized, we will send a formal invitation to all of our local contacts and current clients. Additionally, local businesses, HR professionals, and other organizations that have a logical interest in the content of the training or the services Catalyst hopes to offer will be invited.

In addition to sponsoring these events, we attended a number of local networking opportunities and began to do business development work. We have already started increasing our contact list and making connections with key organizations in the community. We will continue this work moving forward.

To maximize our efforts during the launch, we prepared two printed marketing resources. The first was a two-sided postcard outlining our services and directing clients to the website (see Appendix G, Postcard). Along with our business cards, this postcard was distributed during events and when networking. Also, we made a PDF introductory brochure, which we utilized heavily during networking (see Appendix H, Catalyst Introduction). This brochure gives us a professional introduction and provides information about the company. It includes sample projects we have successfully organized for organizations, professional highlights, and suggested services. We created this brochure following extensive feedback from the human resources professionals in our feedback group. Originally, we had been using an introductory letter
on letterhead, but were informed that this was not professional enough. It was suggested that we make a brochure, and include content of the type we utilized.
Chapter 5: Discussions and Conclusions

Through the course of this project, we learned a great deal. Some of it was new information, some of it reinforced things we were already doing, and some of it raised further questions that we will have to investigate as we move forward. Some changes were required during the project and more will be needed in the future.

Strengths

In several areas, we made very good progress. In these areas, I feel that our work was smooth and productive. Our feedback group was consistently pleased with what we delivered and had few recommendations for major changes. When a larger change was needed, the end result was very satisfactory to both us and the group.

First of all, I am very happy with the design and style elements of what we created. Working with our designer, we got good results overall with our designs, layouts, and visual presentations. We were largely able to accurately predict what would work and what would not, and what effect design elements would have on cultural groups. This element translated well to human resources and corporate audiences, as well. We received little negative feedback regarding our design decisions, and what negative feedback we received, we were largely able to predict and so were expecting it. I feel like the style of our company is polished, professional, and modern.

Our training style was also well-received. We received very positive feedback regarding our speaking styles, interactions with the participants, and training style, for example, balance of lecture to activity. Feedback was positive regarding the activities we
chose to utilize in the training. Explanations were viewed as clear, examples were appropriately given, and the amount of information we delivered was seen as effective. We did a good job of balancing the various training elements so that participants from a wide range of cultures and learning styles were able to enjoy and learn.

We were also praised for our level of expertise and our familiarity and comfort with the material. According to the feedback we received, we created a competent, trustworthy impression. Participants in the training and our feedback group also felt comfortable working with us and confident that we were able to understand their questions and concerns. They felt that we had an accurate understanding of the cultural issues they deal with in their work and daily lives and were well able to meet them. They consistently reported that we were delivering new information and were well-prepared to address questions.

The majority of our content, whether spoken, printed, or multimedia, translated well across cultures, too. We were largely able to predict how people would respond and create appropriate materials. In areas where we knew some groups would have a strong positive response and others would have an equally strong negative response, we were able to make good decisions about how to balance our content or approach so that it was still effective for the majority of recipients. The only consistent suggestion for improvement we received was to shorten and simplify our language, but we became better and better at accomplishing this as the project continued. We also identified effective ways to self-check. We still need further improvement in this regard, but we are doing well and have shown improvement already.
Throughout our work, we noticed a few tools that were extremely useful and that we will be likely to use again. The two most important of these are Basecamp and the Google Apps. Both of these applications are reliable, easy to use, intuitive, and well-designed. We will continue using both tools and will probably expand our use of them in the future. The decision to utilize these tools was somewhat experimental at first. Carroll and I had both used them before but in different contexts. However, we have been completely pleased with the results.

The website Photofeeler was also interesting. After using it for our photos, we were able to start noticing patterns in the photos that received high scores. For example, lighting is important, as is posture. Smiling got good results, but smiling too much could be perceived as unprofessional. Interesting backgrounds received higher scores than plain white backgrounds as long as they were not distracting. Of course, this website is not an absolute guide and does not provide intercultural feedback, but it was a useful tool and we learned more about selecting good photographs by using it. The Flesch-Kincaid readability test was another useful tool. Our writing was consistently viewed as too high-level, and the ability to receive a specific and quantitative score helped us predict when we needed to rewrite.

In addition to these general trends, I also noted three specific areas where we were highly successful and that had a significant impact on our overall project. These areas were the advance work we did, our project management, and the creation of our feedback group. These three areas consistently created key advantages for us, but I was not aware how crucial they would be until we were well into the project and I could see the results from them.
**Advance work.** The series of meetings that Carroll and I used to develop the concept of the business turned out to be an unexpected asset. We began to have these meetings about a year before the project began. Each meeting was long, and they took place frequently over several months. A significant amount of time was invested in this process. At times that could be very frustrating, because there were no tangible results. We sometimes felt as if we were not making progress or were wasting time. However, as the project began to gain momentum, we realized that this time spent had been an invaluable investment.

During each meeting, we discussed every angle of the business. We talked over what we wanted it to look like. We discussed our frustrations with our current affairs, both with English for Life and independent projects we were working on. We shared observations about our clients, including different needs they had, frustrating situations they encountered, and interesting insights we had through working with them. We shared things we read, concepts we were learning, and new things we wanted to study and learn. We dreamed about where we wanted to be in one year, five years, or ten years—whether or not the new venture was successful.

Throughout this whole process, we took detailed notes. We wrote down ideas, lists, phrases, and keywords—basically, we recorded both our own thought processes and anything that we felt might potentially be interesting or useful later. By the time the project moved into the development phase, we had extensive archives built from this information.

Because we took ample time to be very clear in these areas, we found that once we began the actual project, we were well-prepared and well-organized, and had clarity at
each step of the process. We were very much in alignment with each other, were confident, and knew what we wanted. This made the process in general much easier and more automatic for everyone involved, including both us and the consultants we hired to assist us with specific tasks.

Additionally, we found out to our surprise that a large amount of material we would later need for copywriting and other marketing tasks was already present in our notes and just needed to be reorganized. This was true when working with subcontractors as well. Every time something new was needed or there was a question, the basics of what was needed were already there and easily accessible. We reused the information in our notes ourselves to create a lot of the copy for our materials, and we simply shared the documents as they were with our subcontractors.

Subcontractors told us repeatedly throughout the process that we were one of the best organizations they had ever worked with because of this; that working with us was easy and fun. This came as a bit of a surprise because we were very meticulous and detail-oriented with our requests and often felt that we were, at times, being annoyingly particular. We were initially a bit worried that we had too detailed an idea of what we wanted and too much material to work with. However, according to the feedback we received, the opposite was true. This was due to our organization, clarity, the speed with which we could provide needed information, and the depth of information we could provide.

Our contractors were extremely pleased that we had already put a lot of thought into our needs, had clear desires, and had organized so much material that could be read to understand our business. For example, our designer explained that the majority of
clients came to her with very vague ideas. They gave her little material to help her
develop their materials, and she found herself constantly guessing. She disliked being
without a clear understanding of her clients’ businesses and companies, and with only a
general idea of what they wanted. So, one lesson we learned immediately was that it is
helpful to go into consultations with clear ideas and a solid direction to go.

Micromanaging would be counterproductive, but the work we did accelerated the process
and made it easy for our consultant or subcontractor to understand our needs and desires.

All of this was possible because of the original conceptualization and organization
meetings. If we had not dedicated so much time to clarifying exactly what we wanted,
we would not have had the ready answers when needed.

If I had the project to do over again, I would start in the same way, and handle
these original meetings exactly the same way. The blend of structure and freedom those
meetings provided generated useful ideas, and the time spent was well invested. Our
company began, in truth, more than a year ago, when we held the first one of these
sessions.

**Project management.** Another significant strength was our project management.
As the project progressed, it quickly became obvious how complex it was. There were an
endless number of jobs that needed to be coordinated, and many of them needed to be
happening simultaneously. Also, working with subcontractors required very clear
communication and information sharing. Since the same subcontractors were not
involved in every part of the project, we also had a constantly changing team. Working
virtually further compounded all these challenges.
Overall, our system of project management proved to be extremely effective for everyone involved. It allowed the easy integration of other social media and virtual tools. Collaboration was effortless and communication was clear between all parties. File sharing was easy and mistakes and omissions were minimized. It also facilitated our work with subcontractors and consultants far more than we would have guessed. This made it easy to maintain an effective, organized team regardless of which members came and went and who was involved in what portion of which specific project. It was clear as we progressed that without effective tools and organization, the amount of tasks and the teamwork required could easily become overwhelming.

**Feedback group.** The third key area I feel contributed strongly to a successful venture was our creation and use of the feedback group. We created this group primarily to ensure that everything we built would translate well cross-culturally. We expected the group to be useful, but after completing the project, I would say that the group was absolutely crucial. Interculturally, the feedback given by the group was able to identify cultural errors we would never have caught and to suggest creative solutions that we might never have thought of. The group pushed us to a higher level of rigor and professionalism. We also made an effort to hire subcontractors from a variety of cultural backgrounds. This was an advantage for the same reasons. We learned from our conversations with each of these people. Their different perspectives and opinions were extraordinarily valuable.

In our training, we list some of the key benefits of working in a group of mixed cultures as avoidance of group-think, better problem solving, creative thinking, and alternative approaches. By using the feedback group consistently through our project, we
experienced this first-hand. A culturally diverse team is indeed a significant benefit and an extremely useful resource. Our work was, without question, better as a result of the feedback we received.

Additionally, we were surprised by how much the members of the feedback group enjoyed their participation. Initially, we were hesitant to ask too much of them out of a fear of becoming annoying. We were mindful of their time and the fact that they were volunteering to help us. However, as the project continued, we began to observe that they would often ask us if there was anything we needed help with or encourage us to solicit more feedback. Our participants were anxious to be involved and give their opinions, observations, and suggestions. They often assured us that they were learning as much as we were. The experience was positive for everyone. We had not intended to continue utilizing the feedback group as an ongoing tool for the business; however, almost every participant has independently approached us and offered continued help of this nature, with no encouragement to do so from us. We have welcomed such offers and will continue to consult with these individuals as needed.

**Weaknesses.**

While we did many things well, there were a few areas where we needed improvement. A few of these were minor issues, and some were more important. Carroll and I are very adaptable as individuals and as a team, so we were able to operate in the moment to accommodate whatever variables were involved as problems arose. However, in the future, it would be better to be able to predict these issues and prevent them from causing any difficulties.
One very unexpected lesson that came from our work on this project was a new understanding of exactly how much work is necessary to produce professional videos. We grossly underestimated the amount of time and energy this part of the project would take. We spent far longer than we expected developing the script, and our script evolved much more than we would have predicted. Additionally, shooting the videos required more advance preparation than we thought. We spent one full day working with our designer to create the set, take test shots, and verify the sound quality. We spent another day filming test footage. Filming the actual video took a full work day and resulted in a total of seven minutes of film. By the end, we were all completely exhausted. The results were worth it, but it was a surprise for all of us how demanding this task was. Next time we plan videos, we will be much better prepared and have a more realistic idea of what will be required.

Another lesson was how much small problems could impact our project and create big delays. Since our background is primarily in teaching and training, we are very accustomed to improvising effectively and dealing with problems as they appeared. We have a good track record of problem management in our business backgrounds as well. However, when working so extensively with design, we discovered that it is much harder and sometimes impossible to improvise.

For example, our photoshoot was one area where this caused a significant inconvenience. Our plan was to have a variety of images prepared that we could draw from and use over time. Due to the weather the day the shoot was scheduled, we did not get as many pictures as we hoped. The wind was very strong, causing problems with clothing, hair, and even the camera itself. The sunlight was inconsistent as well, making
it difficult to get well-lit shots. Also, we had planned to do a segment of the shoot downtown to create an urban, modern feel, but for unknown reasons, the vehicle and foot traffic was so unusually strong for the day and time we chose that we were unable to get any good shots. Because of all of this, we will probably need to do another shoot sometime in the future.

Several issues also caused a bigger impact on the project. The first of these was our awareness of time. In general, Carroll and I have good time management personally and are skilled at keeping teams on task and moving forward. However, our predictions for how long things would take or how much time we should allot for each task were too short. Another major area in which we need to grow is our ability to code shift into corporate culture. We found it challenging to present a sufficiently professional, polished image in a corporate environment. Finally, we will significantly rework our introductory free training. We made observations and had some new ideas when we ran the practice workshop. We also received important feedback that needs to be incorporated.

**Important Learning**

*Timeline and quality control.* Throughout the course of this project, we consistently underestimated the amount of time each step in the process would take. This was less because we had unrealistic expectations and more because we consistently chose to opt for better work instead of fast results. We frequently had decision points where we had to choose between these two strategies. Sometimes opting for work that is "good enough" and can be completed quickly is a better choice. In other situations, time must be sacrificed in favor of quality. Both of us have chosen to get things done quickly in the past; however, as we began to progress into the project, we were both in total agreement...
that our priority in this case was doing everything to the best of our ability and creating results that were truly excellent. Because of this, we reworked things multiple times and were far more meticulous in our standards when working with others than we might have chosen to be.

This decision alone was not a weakness; in fact, I would call it strength. However, our assessment of how high of quality we would want to achieve, and therefore how long things would take, was not accurate. This has made it difficult to set and meet deadlines. Especially in the case of our launch events, it is causing us to have to reschedule things far more than is ideal. We need to recognize that creating at the level we want to create at simply takes more time, and plan accordingly.

Originally, we had planned four months to complete the majority of the project: from August 2015 to December 18, 2015, with the launch tasks planned for January 2016. As we worked, it became very evident that this timeline was not going to be satisfactory for us. On one hand, we were extremely happy with what we had accomplished up to that point and felt that overall the project was preceding well. However, we also felt rushed and felt that our original timeline did not allow for the attention to detail, the feedback, and the amount of revision that we found ourselves utilizing.

We also encountered an opportunity to work with an external videographer to create at least one of the projected website videos. We discussed this opportunity with our designer and decided that it was a worthwhile step. By doing this, we would have a professional animated introduction and soundtrack that we could use for all future videos.
We would have a chance to learn a lot more about how to create higher-quality videos, and our designer would have a chance to learn as well.

In response to these two elements, we revised our timeline. Instead of planning to finish the majority of the tasks by the end of 2015, we planned to only have the initial draft of the website completed, and all video recording completed. Launch was rescheduled to begin in March.

As it turned out, we finished our video by the new deadline and were also able to create a quick promotional video as well. However, we were still not completely finished with our workbook and poster. We decided to go ahead and bring the website live even though our advertised free resource would not be posted yet; we also set a Mailchimp responder that explained the materials would be available soon and sent as soon as possible. Both went live on the website by May 1, 2016.

Our launch events largely went according to plan, but we met with the same quality concern issues when we presented the practice workshop for our free introductory training. What we had created received positive feedback and was good enough to present, but we were not satisfied with the results and wanted to make changes to accommodate other feedback we received. We rescheduled our two final launch events, and these will now occur in June 2016.

These changes allowed us to slow down our process and be more thorough, eliciting more feedback, and responding more completely to the feedback we received. I do not foresee that this will change. Throughout the course of this project, and especially because of our work with the feedback group, we have become increasingly motivated to
attend to our project in greater detail, observe the feedback we received more closely, and produce a higher-quality product.

**Human resources feedback.** We sought corporate and professional feedback from human resources and business development professionals from several sources. First, many of the participants in our feedback group were currently working in or had strong backgrounds in international human resources. Also, we connected with several professionals who had volunteered to mentor new entrepreneurs and young professionals or entrepreneurs. Greenville, the Upstate, and South Carolina all have a variety of programs of this type, and we took advantage of multiple opportunities to receive this kind of assistance. Some of these mentors we met with only once, but others we met with several times. We explained our business concept, answered questions, and offered our marketing materials for review.

The feedback received from these sources was much more mixed than what we received from others. One core lesson we learned was the crucial importance of utilizing a story-telling approach in our marketing. We expected this to be of vital importance when we worked with individuals, but underestimated the importance when we dealt with corporate representatives. When we told stories that reflected our experience, creative problem solving ability, and made our work tangible and interesting, we received very positive responses. However, the moment we drifted away from this technique, the result was dramatically more negative. Again and again, these professionals specifically recommended an increase in the number of stories we told, both in our materials and in our conversation. It was explained that these stories should be short on our marketing materials and focus on how we provided results to our clients. We should also seize
these stories as opportunities to gracefully name-drop and give examples of other companies who had utilized our services. We had not been doing this nearly consciously enough.

It was also suggested that we offer more quantitative data about our services and past successes and follow that information up with stories and examples. Some examples included data about how many countries we had worked with, how many languages we speak, the size and industry of companies we served, and numbers of clients helped. We tried to improve both this area and strengthen our storytelling approach each time we received this feedback. However, more work is needed, and we will continue to strengthen this aspect of our marketing as we move forward.

**Increasing the level of professional polish.** Another area we struggled with was presenting a polished enough look (both personally and on paper) when we were meeting or communicating with these mentors. Sometimes, this connected to our ongoing issues with time. Often, the materials we had fully developed met with a positive reception, while any materials we had put together quickly to fit immediate needs did not. Repeatedly, we already knew we needed a professional, polished resource, but we had not yet developed one. For example, we were using a simple letter of introduction on letterhead to introduce ourselves to the individuals in the mentoring community, but we received strong feedback that this was too unprofessional and we needed a fully designed brochure for this use. At that point in time, we had not yet had the opportunity to create such a brochure because we had dedicated our time to the website development. We created each new resource every time it was pointed out to us that we appeared unprofessional without it, but this delayed other projects. This aspect will improve with
time and continued work, because many of these materials only need to be developed one

time and can be repeatedly reused. The feedback has been valuable, however, because

now we have a clear direction to work in moving forward with these kinds of materials.

Training results. Overall, our practice workshop was well-received. Feedback

was overwhelmingly positive in general. Our training style was positively reviewed, as

were the activities we chose. The information was seen as useful. Also, the pacing and

the amount of information presented were all well-liked. However, we received two

primary areas of negative feedback, and both had to do with marketing. The first was our

storytelling, and the second was our marketing approach in general.

According to our participants, we do a very good job of storytelling, but we did

not leverage this technique enough. Time was a major concern in the training, because

we had only one hour and a lot of information we wanted to present. Because of this, we

reduced the number of examples and stories from what we would ordinarily use in a

training. After reviewing the training with our participants, however, it was clear that

this was not a good choice. Feedback was universal: the amount of storytelling and

examples needed to increase dramatically, and we needed to make time for it somehow.

The second area we received significant criticism was in our marketing approach

in general. From the feedback we received, we needed to become much more aggressive

and direct. Even the participants from the most indirect cultures gave us the same advice.

We needed to clarify our sales and pitch more confidently and forcefully. It needed to be

clear that we were not giving this training solely for the good of the participants, but

because it was only a sample of what we could offer to paying clients. We needed to

introduce ourselves and debrief our qualifications in an assertive and direct way. It
needed to be very clear who we are, what we do, and how we can help those who are attending our training.

All of this feedback echoed what we heard from human resources professionals, so we know that this is an area that needs a great deal of work. Since this does not come naturally to us, we will need to practice our pitches and rehearse the presentation of our qualifications so that these elements are completely familiar and can be delivered confidently and smoothly. Also, we need to rework the training dramatically. It would be easy to increase the storytelling and strengthen the selling components of the existing structure, but there is no way to do that without exceeding the time limits. We will need to cut down the information we are presenting or find a way to radically alter its presentation to allow the extra time needed. We will need to complete this work before we present the training again in June.

**Cultural Learning**

Through our use of the feedback group, we learned several key things about cultural differences that surprised us or will benefit us to know in the future. Especially important were insights regarding corporate culture, hierarchy, fashion, and racism.

**Marketing and corporate culture.** In many ways, the unity provided by corporate culture had overruled distinctions between cultures based on countries. The extent that this was true surprised us. Often, we expected to encounter differences of opinion in our feedback process, but did not. For example, the repeated and extensive advice we received to strengthen our selling and to market ourselves more forcefully and direct was a surprise. Here was one area where we thought direct and indirect
communication style preferences would have an impact, but the group was in total agreement.

Another area we thought to find cultural difference was in the reaction to a storytelling approach. We expected that more relationship-oriented cultures would be more attracted to this strategy, while more task-focused cultures would be more attracted to hard information. What we found instead was that everyone in our group had the same reaction, regardless of cultural background. Everyone wanted concrete, specific, quantifiable qualifications followed by extensive storytelling. Our feedback did not reflect a lack of appreciation for the hard information; instead, the storytelling was seen equally important and a blend was necessary.

**Hierarchy.** We also came to realize that, while we were very good at foreseeing certain cultural impacts, we were frequently overlooking the importance of hierarchy. The best example of this was the conversation with our Chilean feedback participant about our titles. According to him, status and hierarchy are extremely important in securing contracts and negotiation. Human Resources officials who would be qualified to hire a firm such as ours would not be interested in meeting with a "chief." On the contrary, there would be a sense of insult that the consulting firm did not send a higher-ranking executive to conduct business. Therefore, it would be crucial to identify our positions as company owners and directors on the cards, and to do it clearly. We had no idea that what we had considered a relatively flexible detail was so crucially important.

Because our feedback participant stressed the vital importance of this so strongly, we approached others in our feedback group about it directly. Those from South America confirmed his assessment. U.S. American or western European associates
seemed to easily understand and accept our intended use of the title, but those from other cultures did not. U.S. American and European participants found "Chief Catalyst" creative, modern, and interesting, echoing our own thinking in choosing it. However, this sharp divide made it clear our thought process was biased. As a result of these conversations, we decided to change our titles on the website immediately and in all future printings of business cards. Instead of "Chief Catalyst," we selected "Co-Founder and Director," which was accepted by everyone from whom we solicited feedback.

**Personal appearance.** When we began to analyze our own personal look, we wanted to be certain we were presenting ourselves in a way that was professional, competent, and attractive across as broad a range of cultures as possible, while still honoring our own backgrounds and preferences. Corporate culture does unify fashion choices across cultures to some degree. The preference for more modest, serious clothing was unsurprisingly universal. However, an appropriate length for skirts and shirts, a preference for skirts instead of pants, personal grooming standards, the use of color or jewelry, and makeup all varied significantly.

Overall, working with our range of consultants, we learned that shirt length is important to European tastes. Shirts should be much longer than they often are in the U.S. and should cover the butt completely. If the shirt is tucked in, this of course does not matter, but if the shirt is designed to be worn untucked, length is important. Shorter shirts are considered unattractive and too revealing.

Skirt length, however, was more flexible for our European participants than our American ones. U.S. American consultants strongly preferred longer skirts, knee length or mid-calf being the ideal. Our European and Latin consultants, on the other hand,
simply did not care as much about this factor. As long as the skirt was long enough to cover everything else even when seated, it did not matter if the skirt showed more leg.

U.S. American participants often preferred pants for skirts for women. Skirts were frequently seen as being too sexy, feminine, or flirtatious. Pants were seen as being more serious and respectable. In Europe and Latin America, skirts were more generally acceptable. Looking feminine was considered a good thing, especially for Latin consultants. The idea that it was possible to be both feminine and serious or professional was easily accepted by these groups, but not by U.S. American consultants.

Personal grooming was less important for U.S. American consultants than for Europeans, and much less important than for Latins. Ironing, for example, was generally overlooked by the U.S. participants, but mentioned by both European and Latin consultants. Latin participants, especially Brazilian, had very strong opinions on other standards of personal grooming such as body hair maintenance, use of scents, makeup, and nail care. Both U.S. and European standards were lax in comparison in these areas. Interestingly enough, Latin participants stressed that the standards in these particular areas were similar for men and women. U.S. Americans often ignore masculine grooming, at least on these points, entirely.

In general, Europeans preferred much more monotonous and dark colors, such as grey, white, and black. Very minimal jewelry was preferred as well. Too much color or large or flashy jewelry was seen as being low-class and unprofessional. Latins had exactly the opposite impression. There were limits for the South Americans as well, but in general, creative use of eye-catching details were seen as tasteful, modern, and intelligent. The same limits were true for makeup. South Americans allowed for more
use of color and drama. Europeans preferred very subtle uses. U.S. Americans preferred subtle makeup but were less interested in this factor than in modesty in general.

Overall, we chose a balanced approach, noting carefully all the advice and feedback we received. We blended the different strategies that were suggested to us with our own personal preferences and created a new look that tried to walk a line between the cultures. This was positively received, and feedback on our appearance during our practice workshop was extremely good.

Also worth noting is that these cultural observations are based on feedback given to us personally by our particular feedback group participants. Overgeneralizing or stereotyping from these points would not be useful. Still, this information proved effective for our purposes and gives us a direction to follow in the future, with adjustments to be made as we learn more.

Racism. One other interesting issue arose as we tried to select our stock photos and video footage to use on our website. Through our designer and videographer, we had been given access to several large professional stock databases. As we looked through the selections, we were deliberately seeking footage that reflected productive diversity. We wanted our video footage to illustrate people of diverse ethnicities, genders, cultures, and backgrounds working together. However, we soon realized that there was a subtle form of systemic racism at play. Footage of the sort we were seeking was extremely hard to find.

The majority of footage with the keywords "business" or "professional" showed middle-age white businessmen; the majority that linked to "happy family" or "good relationships" showed middle-class, young, European-American families. Footage
showing women was notably less professional; footage showing African American or Hispanic professionals interacting generally suggested anger, aggression, or inappropriate emotionality. When we attempted to search for footage showing people from other cultures, we largely found third-world village children playing football in the dirt or Asians in traditional clothing poling boats or wading in rice patties. We were extremely surprised by how difficult it was to acquire reasonable, acceptable footage and spent a great deal of time on this part of the process. Finally, to select our stock footage, we had to request help from our videographer. Our videographer was Asian-American and understood our dilemma when we explained the problem. She was able to find more reasonable stocks. Even so, this issue was a problem multiple times in the course of the project.

**Remaining Questions.**

After having reviewed our strengths, weaknesses, important learnings, and cultural insights, we had a clear idea of things we would repeat and things we would alter moving forward. Some questions, however, still remained. These will require further investigation and research, whether that is through conversations with our feedback group, returning to the literature, or some other source entirely.

On our contact page, we offer a free 15-minute Skype call to discuss potential clients' specific problems and whether or not our services would be a good fit for them. The idea behind offering this was to encourage people to call. Also, we wanted to make it clear that we could quickly and easily help them get started in the process of determining what services they needed. However, it is not clear whether the idea of a Skype call is a good selling technique or not. One risk is that it may give the impression
that we are trying to limit how much time we spend with potential clients, or that we charge for basic selling consultations. Of course, if we had a serious potential client with reasonable issues, we would happily spend as much time as was needed with that client to make sure we were a good match and that the services we offered would meet the real needs. We decided to try offering the Skype call and see what happened, hoping that it would encourage clients to call and inquire about our services without feeling pressured. We suspect this method might work better with individuals than with corporations, but we will experiment and closely monitor our results in order to make a final decision. Our feedback group was consulted about this issue but did not have much useful information for us.

Another website issue is where to locate the menu of services. At the moment, the page is hidden except by a link that can be found on the Work With Us page. There is no way to link directly to the service menu without passing through other parts of the website first. We have decided to locate this link on the Work With Us page so that potential clients have read through the information on this page before skipping directly to the service offerings.

We chose to locate the service menu itself on its own page to keep the information separate and to keep the pages shorter and easier to read. We feel like that was a good decision; however, we are not sure use of the sub-link is effective. Making the services easier to access via a direct link or a new page makes sense, especially if the potential client has already had some experience with our company, is aware of their need for intercultural training, and is ready to contract services. In this case, facilitating a way for them to quickly read about what we offer and decide they want to purchase our
training seems far more effective. On the other hand, there is a chance that clients in this category will just contact us directly, rather than spending much time on the website reading. If this is the case, the location of the page would not matter as much.

Furthermore, we were able to save on hosting and design expenses by using a sub-link under another page heading rather than a completely separate website page. This issue also needs more investigation, and it is likely that we will relocate this page in the future.

Another key unanswered question is in regard to our service offerings. We are confident that the services offered are more or less in line with needs and with what other companies are offering, but are they really the most effective way to market? For example, is the global leadership certification a truly effective offering? Corporate and human resource members of the feedback group reported that they would be interested in the program when we explained what it entailed, but that they would not be interested in the certificate and that, in fact, calling it a certificate would discourage them from investigating the offering. They felt our approach was indicative of our academic roots and recommended we offer the same training but with a different name. However, we received the opposite feedback from others. Furthermore, it is extremely possible that we can partner with a local university, as we have done in the past, to offer a certificate that is supported by graduate credit hours, making it much more valuable and worthwhile to the individual.

We could avoid this conflict by simply creating two offerings: one called "certificate" that included the credit, and one called "program" that did not. However, our past experience has shown us that dividing our programs in this specific way yields more work than sales results and is not worth the additional trouble. All of these issues...
need to be taken into further consideration before we decide, and further investigation into this issue is necessary. There is definite potential that similar issues exist with other offerings, which we are currently unaware of. We need to continue this discussion with our feedback group, stay aware of current research, and carefully monitor the responses we get when we describe our services to potential clients.

In terms of our business structure, it has recently come to our attention that a 50/50 partnership such as we had planned may not be the best option for a variety of reasons. We discussed our new business venture with English for Life's tax accountant, and learned more. Decision making and resolving disagreements can be complex in a straight partnership because there is no tie-breaking factor. Furthermore, there are additional legal and tax complications for this type of partnership. Currently, we are considering alternatives and investigating other ways to create a fair split that are more stable and less complex. We intend to discuss this issue with a business mentor or coach from the state entrepreneurial support organization first, and later with a lawyer. At this time, we are not sure what our options are or what will work best for us in the long term. This is a vitally important point, however, and we need to resolve these issues before we accept any significant clients. Finding answers to these questions is a top priority.

**Conclusion**

Overall, I feel that our project was a success. We learned a great deal about cultural similarities and differences through working with our feedback group. We also learned a tremendous amount about corporate culture and what is needed to market and sell effectively. We found out that we had some surprising strengths, especially in terms of planning, organization, and project management that we had not been aware of before.
Our basic business plan and approach is solid, even though this will need to evolve over time. I am satisfied with the website and materials we have created, and am looking forward to providing our services to new clients on a new level. It is an exciting prospect, and also a little frightening. We have reached new levels of professionalism through this project, but it has also become clear how much more we need to grow to reach our goals.
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APPENDIX A: BUSINESS PLAN
Executive Summary

Catalyst Intercultural is an intercultural training business located in Greenville, South Carolina. Catalyst provides intercultural, leadership, communication, global skills, and language training to individuals and corporations that do business abroad, or in some way have a need to function effectively across the boundaries created by cultural difference.

The services Catalyst offers can be grouped into three main categories: corporate, individual, and academic. For corporations or other organizations, Catalyst offers intercultural skills trainings, country specific trainings, global or virtual teambuilding, expatriate relocation assistance, and supplemental services such as business English classes. For individuals, various coaching services are available, including high-end language training, entrepreneurial business coaching, and leadership coaching. Academic services include campus assessments, workshops to train best practices for working with international students, orientation workshops for international students, and training for domestic students that work with internationals. Catalyst also offers a Global Leadership certification course, which is a blend of assessment, coaching, and skills training.

Clients previously served by Catalyst co-founders include individuals and organizations such as Michelin NA, Furman University, Wofford College, Ma’aden Saudi Arabian Mining Company, Fluor, the Greenville Literacy Association, South Carolina Department of Education, Sealed Air, Kawasaki, ZF Group, Bosch-Brasil, Vivo (Telefónica Brasil), King Automation, As-Sabeel Academy, and Sunlin South Korea. Catalyst aims to make an impact globally by empowering individuals to become global leaders, communicating more effectively, reaching sounder and more accurate decisions, and reaching new levels in their ability to empathize with and understand others. Cultural conflict is a major issue in today's global world, resulting in business loss and personal hardship. The skills Catalyst trains are relevant and crucial to anyone who must work with those who are different from him or herself.

Catalyst Intercultural is the result of a partnership between two individuals: Kim Carroll and Desiree Beauchamp. Carroll holds a Bachelor’s degree in Environmental Studies and Anthropology from the Naropa Institute, an Advanced TESL Certificate from the TESL Training Cooperative, an In-service Certificate in Teacher Training and Education from the Academy of Teaching, and a Master’s degree in Education from Columbia College. Beauchamp holds a Bachelor's degree in English and history with concentrations in psychology and communications, a TESOL certificate from College of Charleston, and a Master's degree in Intercultural Relations from University of the Pacific in cooperation with the Intercultural Communications Institute. Both Carroll and
Beauchamp are Certified Professional Coaches, and Beauchamp is a qualified administrator of the Kozai Group's Global Competencies Index.

The Greenville, South Carolina area was chosen as the location for this business due to the city’s fast economic growth and to its ability to attract international business. Greenville has proved its dedication to fostering productive international relationships and to being a soft landing place for expatriate employees, and its planned future initiatives predict that this trend will continue and grow.

The strategy of success of Catalyst Intercultural is: to increase people’s knowledge about intercultural relations, focusing primarily on expatriates, executives and team leaders, and corporations that are involved in international business; to focus secondarily on helping local higher-education institutions provide higher quality services to their international students and improve the success and retention of these students; to provide high-end, expert-level skills training to all clients; to provide coaching and consulting services that help clients get the results they are seeking, improve their personal effectiveness, and build successful careers; and to build productive and mutually beneficial subcontracting relationships with other related businesses. Catalyst Intercultural is looking forward to expanding their ability to provide these services to clients locally, virtually, and farther afield.
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I. General Company Description

BUSINESS BACKGROUND
Catalyst Intercultural grows out of an existing company, English for Life Academy (EFL). EFL is a language training and TESOL certification academy that has been operating in Greenville, South Carolina, for approximately 15 years.

EFL offers private language courses and runs a TESOL certification course in partnership with Greenville Technical College and the College of Charleston. The company belongs to Kim Carroll, and Desiree Beauchamp has been employed within it to provide intercultural and language training to both TESOL students and private clients. Over time, EFL found itself wanting to focus more attention intercultural skills training, and at the same time, found that the need existed. In order to more effectively accommodate this growth and more logically market its various services, EFL made the decision to divide.

The resulting split leaves all TESOL certification-related programs housed as part of EFL. All corporate services, university services, coaching clients, and intercultural training projects will now be housed as part of Catalyst Intercultural. This allows the two companies to create an effective division between TESOL and the other services.

MISSION STATEMENT
Our mission is to build powerful global leaders by improving intercultural communication and facilitating successful international transitions. Companies don't go global; people do -- and by providing effective, skills-based training, we help solve real world problems, propel businesses forward, and create positive change.

COMPANY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
- To offer expert-level language and culture learning experiences to clients, with the goal of raising the bar in intercultural training to create leaders who understand difference and can communicate and act with agility in an increasingly global world;

- To promote whole systems thinking, always valuing responsible cultural interaction and sustainable practices, including
  - responsible and conscious growth and improvement
  - commitment to customers, contractors, and partner organizations;
  - exceeding the expectations of our customers in both the quality of the product and personal service they receive

- To provide a minimum of $18,000 the first year, given 6 months of full business functionality.
• By 2018, to provide a minimum of $54,000 worth of services (50% increase + the same amount across a full year).
• Within 5 years, to be bringing in $150,000 worth of services per year.

BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY
Cultural difference can create problems, misunderstanding, and conflict any time people from diverse backgrounds work together, whether that is virtually or in the same office, abroad or at home. On the other hand, successful communication across cultures means successful business around the world. When individuals learn to adapt to new cultural situations and understand those who are different from themselves, they become empowered leaders capable of better decision making and innovative approaches. It is the mission of Catalyst Intercultural to partner with individuals to grow them into these kinds of agile leaders in their organizations, communities, and personal lives.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths
Catalyst Intercultural is an adaptable company. While it is new, it is backed by two partners who have proven their abilities to manage small businesses effectively, recognize when change is needed and effectively generate solutions. Both founders are extremely knowledgeable in their field and bring a blend of theoretical, formal education, practical training, and ample real-world and personal experience. Between the individuals involved, multiple languages are spoken fluently and in-depth personal cultural expertise in a variety of cultures is available. The services offered are well-thought-out and based on proven strategies and approaches that are known to generate fast, reliable results.

Weaknesses
Being a small company, resources are limited and can be an inhibitive factor in the company’s short-term growth. Also, at present there are only two individuals continuously involved in the company. Because this is a new venture, both individuals must work in other organizations to maintain stable full-time employment, further limiting the amount of time and other resources that can be dedicated exclusively to this venture. However, this weakness is partially ameliorated by Catalyst's relationship to EFL, which is a more established company and can be source of subcontractors and other resources.

Opportunities
Catalyst's opportunities for growth include building effective relationships with the large number of international businesses that are currently operating in the Greenville or Upstate area. Also, closer relationships can be fostered with the city government and various business organizations that can help Catalyst identify potential clients and establish a credible reputation. Furthermore, Catalyst can work to develop strong relationships with other training companies and individuals who work in related fields, to whom Catalyst might serve as a subcontractor. EFL also offers Catalyst a list of previous
clients who were satisfied with the services they received, which Catalyst can leverage to build its own client base.

**Threats**
Economic changes globally will affect global business, which will in turn affect the client base in Greenville itself and in other areas. Many established intercultural training companies exist and are offering similar services; it will be a challenge for Catalyst to stand out within this crowd and distinguish itself.

**LEGAL FORM OF OWNERSHIP**
Catalyst will be incorporating as an LLC partnership.
II. Services

The purpose of Catalyst Intercultural is to offer expert-level training and coaching services and to stand out among its competitors by providing unforgettable and unique learning experiences to its customers. Every training offered by the company is designed and coordinated around proven methods, and then customized to meet the client's specific needs.

**Intercultural Skills Training (with country-specific customization)**

Any combination of up to 8 two-hour skills-based modules that will expand clients' awareness of intercultural communications issues and focus on training real-world solutions. This program is for companies, organizations, or individuals who want to improve communication, facilitate successful international transitions, apply problem solving strategies to intercultural issues, work with diverse populations more effectively, or know how to live and work in a specific country.

**Global and Virtual Teams Training**

A one-day training (plus additional coaching) that incorporates validated psychometric assessments to analyze both the individuals' and team's cultural tendencies and strengths and weaknesses working in diverse environments. This includes a combination of skills-based training, general intercultural training, and one-on-one coaching to minimize misunderstandings, maximize effectiveness, save time and money on travel and ineffective meetings, and understand how to work across cultural and language differences.

**Global Leadership Certification Program**

A certificate program that empowers global leaders to make informed decisions, communicate well across differences, and solve real-world problems. It includes work with assessments, intercultural communications training, global team development, and ongoing coaching to create real change. It is offered to both groups and individuals and includes 2-3 days of training plus six months of coaching and support.

**Expatriate Relocation Training**

A combination of intercultural skills training, country specific skills, and language training designed to help individuals and families be prepared for a new culture and language, decrease the effects of culture shock and relocation issues, meet people, feel at home, and become productive members of the new culture as quickly as possible. This program blends coaching and skills training and can include expatriate orientation, relocation assistance, and ongoing language training.

**Business English Training**

Targeted, customized language training designed to meet the needs of the group or individual. Offered in ongoing packages of 1-4 sessions per week or 16+ hour intensive sessions. Can be delivered onsite, online, or in a blended format.
**Academic Campus Assessments**
For schools and universities who want to prepare for an increasing number of international students and/or create solid structures to support international and domestic students, faculty, and staff as they try to work together successfully. This program involves interviews with key staff, campus visits, and delivery of a written assessment with specific recommendations.

**Best Practices for Working with International Students Workshops**
Professional development workshops designed to improve the effectiveness of staff who must work closely with international students. Participants learn to understand and communicate effectively, and create fair and effective policies.

**English Language and Academic Culture for International Students**
Program development and implementation of orientation courses, academic English classes, and workshops to train academic skills, specifically targeted to international students who are new to campus, are struggling to adjust to US culture and academia, are having academic language challenges, or otherwise need assistance orienting or integrating.

**Training for Domestic Students**
Program development or implementation of peer mentoring or peer tutoring programs, conversation partners, RA training, and pre-and post-training for study abroad students.

**PRICING**
The following prices are the introductory rates, good for the first year:
- General intercultural skills trainings range from $1750 to $4900, depending on the duration of the training.
- Team trainings cost $7000 for up to 8 individuals.
- Global Leadership Certification costs $10,000 for a group of up to 5, or $2,800 per individual participant.
- Relocation trainings vary depending on the supplemental services requested, but a half-day of training plus 3 one-on-one coaching sessions costs $1750 for a group, with an additional fee of $300/person, or $780 per individual. Local orientation services cost $100/hour and include interpretation/translation services in Spanish, Portuguese, French, or German.
- Business English training costs $65/hour, with discounts available based on packages purchased or in combination with other services.
MARKET RESEARCH – Local Area

Greenville, South Carolina has a focused, city-wide initiative to attract international business and create a welcoming space for expatriate employees. Additionally, it already hosts over 240 of these types of businesses already and this number is continually growing.

Greenville has more foreign investment per capita than any other place in the country. It has been voted as the number one location in the country by the *Site Selection Magazine* for attracting and expanding international business over the past decade. It also boasts frequent inclusion in various rankings of cities that offer the best places to live.

Greenville is the largest county in the state of South Carolina, and its population has grown steadily, increasing from 380,000 in 2000 to 491,863 in 2015 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. At the time of the 2000 census, 4.9% of Greenville County or roughly 19,000 people were foreign-born, and in the estimates of 2008, the foreign-born population of Greenville County increased by 72.3%, from 18,420 people in 2000 to 31,733 in 2007. That number continues to rise, climbing an additional 7.8% this year alone.

According to the statistics, the Hispanic population alone has jumped by 122% between 2000 and 2008, and about 10% of Greenville County residents speak a language other than English at home. Of that 10%, 51% reported that they did not speak English very well. Along with General Electric, one the most reputable American companies in the world, Michelin, a large French company, and BMW, which is German, international businesses in the area continue to employ expatriated people from Germany, Japan, India, France, and Brazil, just to name a few countries.

Academic clients can potentially include the 75 colleges in South Carolina, at least 35 of which are located in the Upstate. The number of international students enrolled is US universities has increased by 85% since 2005, and accounted for $1.13 million in 2015.

MARKET RESEARCH: Intercultural Training

A recent study listed surveyed HR directors and found that intercultural sensitivity was ranked as a highly desirable skill, with 73% of managers listing it within the top three. Cross-cultural conflict management was included by 50% of managers. Furthermore, 80% of relocation failures are attributed to the employee's inability to adjust to their new environment. The average cost to a corporation of a failed expatriate assignment of a senior-level employee is $3 million.

Prior research examined established intercultural training companies more closely and determined that the general format of training being utilized by Catalyst (modules that can be combined in different ways to create highly flexible and customized trainings) is an established and effective approach. Offering services in a menu-like fashion that
enables clients to easily select what is most useful for them was demonstrated to be a useful technique, and one which Catalyst has also adopted. Additionally, the standard and most popular training subjects were also identified and compared with Catalysts' offerings. In all of these areas, Catalyst is in line with leading established companies. Several gaps were also identified which Catalyst is well-equipped to fill. Country-specific training for Latin America and Brazil was one such gap, and Catalyst has significant experience and language ability working with these cultures. Trainings for virtual workers and virtual teams were also less common but much-needed. Virtual, online training itself is another avenue that could potentially be leveraged by Catalyst, since Catalyst is experienced in creating and offering these types of courses. Leadership and executive coaching combined with a global emphasis were also less common, and Catalyst is qualified to use several assessments to provide a more rigorous, accurate, and reliable approach to this kind of training.

FEATURES AND BENEFITS

<table>
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<th>Features</th>
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| **Intercultural Training Services** | • Various 2 hour modules which can be combined to create full-length trainings  
• Highly customizable, flexible content  
• Validated, reliable psychometric assessments to accurately identify strengths and weaknesses  
• One-on-one coaching by experienced, certified coaches  
• Flexible formats  
• Expert-level trainers with years of experience  
• Courses available in-person, online, or blended | • Improved communication with diverse individuals  
• Increased effectiveness at work  
• More functional, efficient, and effective teams  
• Innovative, out-of-the-box thinking  
• Improved business success internationally |
| **Academic** | • Workshops target needed | Universities and colleges are |
**Services**

- **skills and teach practical applications**
- Offerings range from campus consultations to professional development assistance
- Programs include both domestic and international students

**better equipped to understand and deal effectively with their international students**
- International student retention is increased
- Domestic students are better equipped to take full advantage of opportunities to grow their global skills, whether by working with international students here or by studying abroad

**CUSTOMERS**

Clients who are interested in intercultural training may be:

1. International corporations who routinely bring expatriate employees into the US
2. Companies who routinely utilize international teams virtually
3. Individual expatriates living in the Upstate
4. Other intercultural training companies or relocation companies to whom Catalyst might subcontract
5. Other companies offering different, but related, services, such as other forms of coaching or training
6. The colleges and universities that are based in the Upstate, which all have significant international student bodies

**COMPETITION**

Numerous other intercultural training companies exist, and all offer essentially the same menu of services. A few of these are large, international firms themselves, and these companies generally hold contracts to provide training and relocation services directly to the major international corporations. Many more of the other intercultural training providers are small firms or individually operating independently. Most of these firms base a large portion of their business on subcontracting their services to the larger firms mentioned above. Some firms handle a combination of their own clients and subcontracts. In this way, the two competing styles of company enjoy a symbiotic relationship.

It is worth noting that due to this dynamic, competition does not work the same way as it might in most industries. The majority of potential competitors are also potential associates, and it is common for companies in this industry to attempt to find ways to work together for mutual benefit.
<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wetzel</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>511 Pettigrú St.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greenville, SC</td>
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<tr>
<td>29601</td>
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<tr>
<td>(864) 286-1177</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relocation services, country-specific basic IC training, language classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-established company with strong connections to BMW and other German companies in the Upstate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relocation services offer an easy entry point for packaging other services jointly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainers, program developers, and coaches frequently have little qualification (at least in the Greenville office)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training services offered are basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistently receives poor feedback from clients</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **CORE Languages**  |
| 28 Global Dr.,  |
| Greenville, SC  |
| 29605  |
| (843) 608-8242  |
| Language learning and translation company that also offers cultural training |
| Cultural training options are inexpensive and bundled with language services, making it a good option for corporations that need both |
| Training services are basic and trainers and underqualified |
| Cultural training is not emphasized |

| **Global LT**  |
| 1871 Woodslee Dr.  |
| Troy, MI 48083  |
| Relocation training, translation, intercultural, language, and workforce development |
| Well-known internationally |
| Corporate clients |
| Ability to package all services in a single source |
| Well-developed cultural training program |
| Highly customizable program |
| Not locally based |
| Does not offer online options |

| **Aperian Global**  |
| Boston Office:  |
| (617) 502-8600  |
| Intercultural training company serving corporations, higher education, and individuals |
| Well known internationally |
| Highly qualified trainers |
| Variety of courses/training options |
| Online features |
| Offers assessments |
| Offers coaching |
| Not a local operator |
| Opportunity to subcontract rather than directly compete |
Catalyst’s strategy will be to combine the two approaches, both seeking independent contracts from the large number of international companies based locally and in the Upstate, and attempting to develop friendly relationships with other training firms that will yield subcontracting arrangements. Given the fact that direct work pays much better than subcontracted work, Catalyst will place an emphasis on marketing directly to local companies.

Catalyst can distinguish itself from competitors because of the level of expertise of its founders, who combine business experience, personal intercultural experience, and a strong educational background with years of training experience in a wide range of context. The quality of the trainings is high; the trainings are well-designed and effective as well as interesting and engaging. Additionally, Catalyst offers a higher level of coaching and one-on-one than many of its competitors, and is certified to use several different psychometric assessment tools to offer more accurate results and feedback in these kinds of contexts.

Catalyst’s plan is to take the following strategy:

1. Provide well-designed, interesting, expert level training to its customers that is both engaging and informative and yields real-world results
2. Provide one-on-one or small group coaching to deliver even more customized, accurate, and intensive feedback to clients and to guide them into the most effective routes to change
3. Make information about its services available on its webpage and via social networking sites, and by maintaining a blog page and a database of resources online
4. Network and create strong relationships in the Upstate with the city organizations, HR departments and organizations, and locally-based international businesses
5. Network and create strong relationships within the intercultural training community by participating in professional development, continuing education, and other such opportunities
6. Take advantage of conferences, trade shows, and other similar opportunities to network, share knowledge, and showcase the company's services, as appropriate to the venue
7. Reach out to local business leaders by offering presentations, sponsoring or assisting with community events, and otherwise working to participate in, educate, and benefit the community in applicable ways.

**PROMOTION**

Catalyst Intercultural aims to spread its name and build its reputation by promoting its services through different marketing channels:

- **Networking** – Through networking, we have the chance to meet people that perhaps will use our services in the future or share the information with someone. Our company is involved in various networking circles both locally on via social media, in the arenas of intercultural training, international relations, intercultural communication, small business leadership, coaching, marketing, and female entrepreneurship.

- **Word-of-mouth** - This form of promotion is known as the most powerful cost-effective form of marketing. Our plan in using this form of marketing is to build our reputation through our customers’ experiences and through individuals' contact with us either in person or online.

- **Advertising** – Catalyst plans to create printed materials for distribution at local events and banners and other materials as needed for conferences, trade shows, etc.

- **Web Site** – Our prospective customers can learn about our company and services offered by accessing our online information on our well-designed and resource-filled website.

- **Community Involvement** – Maintaining contact with the local international and business communities, including the ICU, The International Task Force, Upstate Alliance, and various other similar organizations, we have the opportunity to share our expertise and available services.

- **Conferences, Continuing Education, Professional Development** – Educational events like SIETAR, SIIC, etc. provide a venue for connecting with other professionals in the field, sharing our knowledge, and learning from others. These are valuable opportunities to build high-quality relationships with potential associates.

**PRICING**

The company’s price policy aims to have a higher-end price point that is still low enough to be accessible and competitive. Catalyst intends to offer a high-quality service at a reasonable rate. Each service will most likely be somewhat customized for each client, which will result in slightly varying prices. Each component can be itemized separately, however, which will allow the client to understand the budget. Catalyst adds a profit margin of 15-40% to its services based on cost of materials, labor, and operation expenses. The low overhead of a primarily virtual business allows Catalyst to keep most of its costs low, saving the customer that additional source of expense.
LOCATION
Catalyst is a virtual business based out of the homes of the co-founders and partners with various local organizations to hold events and trainings in-person when necessary. Privately contracted trainings are generally held at the office of the client. Additional conference room or office space can be obtained as needed in the Merovan Center in downtown Greenville. Catalyst plans to continue as a virtual business, which will allow the business to grow with minimum financial strain, allowing financial resources to be put toward marketing and hiring other professional and administrative help.

DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS
Catalyst will advertise online, but will spend most effort targeting 3 specific populations: international corporations, expatriate or other individuals who need to work internationally, and other intercultural training firms. Some effort will also be made to reach out to local colleges and universities.

Marketing efforts will include:

Companies
- Reaching out to HR departments
- Networking in local business organizations
- Presenting at related educational events intended for this audience
- Maintaining a presence at trade shows

Individuals
- Maintaining involvement in local international groups
- Word-of-mouth from existing individual clients
- Social media marketing

Other trainers
- Attending and presenting at conferences
- Social media presence and participation
- Leveraging existing contacts to broaden network

Universities
- creating and maintaining relationships with departments of International Studies and Intensive English
IV. Management and Organization

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:
Catalyst Intercultural is a virtual business with its physical elements shared between the private offices of the co-founders, and additional physical space rented on an as-needed basis. It is managed entirely by the co-founders, Kim Carroll and Desiree Beauchamp. Various support professionals are contracted as needed, as are additional trainers, coaches, and language instructors. An accountant is utilized quarterly to manage the books, and a web and graphic designer is on retention.

Catalyst plans to continue as a virtual/home-based business. These accommodations will allow the business to grow with minimum financial strain, allowing financial resources to be put toward marketing and hiring office help and other professional services as needed.

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT:
This company is a full partnership between Kim Carroll and Desiree Beauchamp. The following agreements have been made as to the management of the company:

Decision Making:
All major decisions are to be by unanimous agreement between the co-founders. These decisions include issues concerning contracting debt, accepting clients outside of the usual range of commitment, and any changes in the brand or services offered. All other decisions are to be made by unanimous agreement the first year, and re-evaluated every year thereafter based on the division of labor as it changes with the natural growth and development of the company.

Any arbitration or tie-breaking when the co-founders are unable to reach a consensus is to be decided via mediation. The first step in this process is friendly mediation involving two-mutually agreed-upon individuals who are familiar with the business, its history, and the co-founders. The first of these should be Elaine Bouse; the second can be selected when needed. If an agreement cannot be reached in this way, formal legal mediation should be sought, and each party should make every effort to find an equitable solution. Cases should only be taken to court as an absolute last resort.

Financial Distribution:
The fiscal year for the company will begin on January 1. Jointly, the partners made an initial fiscal contribution of $3000. When that contribution is entirely used for company development, the partners may agree to contribute an additional $3000, and this process will continue as long as outside fiscal contributions are necessary. If the business closes for any reason, these contributions are lost. All remaining debt must be equalized and split between the partners. Capital contributions will not be reimbursed; all profits will remain with the business. English for Life agrees to cover the cost of any shared resources between the two companies until then end of the first fiscal year, without seeking repayment.

Monthly salaries will be paid to each partner, beginning when operating expenses plus salary costs have accumulated sufficiently to cover 8 months. Additionally, the
company must show stability or growth for one year before any salaries may be distributed. Salaries start at $500/month and increase by $250/month each time the co-founders agree and the required conditions are present.

Bonuses shall be paid as follows: 8% of the total earned for each group training to each partner and 50% for the partner servings as the instructor or coach for any one-on-one services rendered. These bonuses shall be paid no later than each quarter, and the amount of the bonuses should be re-evaluated and adjusted yearly or with each salary increase.

Freelance teachers for one-on-one services shall be paid at a rate of $25-30/hour, based on skills, experience, and etc. Freelance providers of one-on-one coaching services shall be paid at $90-115/hour, depending on the package the client has purchased.

Additionally, Catalyst sets the intention of donating 5% of profits (or an equivalent value) into a charitable source selected by the co-founders.

Dissolution:

In the event of the death of one of the co-founders, all debts should first be equalized between partners. After debt has been settled, the first priority should be to ensure that Catalyst is left a stable business and the interests of the remaining partner in Catalyst are protected. The second priority should be the care and benefit of the family of the deceased partner.

If one partner wishes to leave the company, capital will be divided in a lump-sum settlement. All training, marketing, branding, and any other intellectual materials remain the sole property of Catalyst Intercultural. Partners may continue to use the information included in the trainings, but not the training plans or materials themselves. All debts should be equalized between the two partners. A buy-out option should be offered to the exiting partner.

Finally, any partner wishing to leave should sign a non-compete agree that stipulates the partner may not work with any clients of Catalyst Intercultural by providing the same services, and may not utilize the same training designs or materials.
Professional and Advisory Support

✓ **Co-Founders and Directors**
  Kim Carroll
  Desiree Beauchamp

✓ **Web and Graphic Design**
  Vanessa Ramos

✓ **Business Consulting**
  Gary Kohl

✓ **Taxes**
  Allen Hendrick, El Quetzal Sin Fronteras

✓ **Accountant**
  Elaine Bouse
V. Appendices

A. Client Feedback
B. Financial Plans and Projections
C. Kim Carroll Resume
D. Desiree Beauchamp Resume
E. Partnerships, Clients, and Projects
F. Industry studies: Representation of International Business in Greenville
G. Brochures and Advertising Materials (attachment)
Appendix A: Client Feedback

“Desiree is the coach that everybody can dream off. She listens, analyzes and communicates back to you exactly what you need to hear not only to get better, but to get the best out of you in every aspect. She manages to open the hidden treasures in you, make your realize how valuable they are and how to use them – and all that with a very patient, supportive and friendly attitude. Desiree invests her whole self in what she does, acts always very professional and not just teaches you the correct approach but showing you the perfect example of it. If you want to improve, there is no better and easier and faster and more efficient way than to work with Desiree. With her, the sun is shining on your life again.”

-- Martina Hulsey,
Chemist specializing in QC/QA, Sales operations and Public Relations

“I met Desiree two years ago. I was a little bit hesitant at first and I thought I wouldn’t be relaxed with her. But right away I felt like she understood me, she was offering exactly what I wanted. I like working with Desiree because she makes you feel really comfortable and you enjoy the classes. Everything is tailored exactly to your needs and wishes so you can really focus on things that you want to improve. She is patient, very knowledgeable and she explains things very well.
I would 100% recommend Desiree to anyone. If you are looking for a really nice and knowledgeable teacher, I highly recommend giving her a chance. You won’t regret it.
Desiree is very professional and hardworking and she cares for her clients. Our business relationship has evolved into a lifelong friendship. I never thought that I would find such a good friend while searching for a coach.”

--- Spela Avbelj
International Tourism Management

“Desiree is very approachable and really friendly. I was so full of doubts and felt so unsure but she made me feel right at home from the get-go. Over the last couple of years I have worked with many, many different coaches and trainers but I stuck with her through and through because she is the best. Others were also good, but no one comes close to her. She is so passionate and brings so much energy to the class that it really rubs off on you. One hour per session felt too short! I learned a great deal and had a lot of fun.
She is also patient. Throughout our lessons I had tons and tons of questions and she answered each one of them, both during classes and through emails. She would put a lot of effort and care in answering them and made sure I understood. I tend to ask the same question to many different trainers just to get different perspectives and I have always found Desiree's answers to be the most informative and most helpful. She went above and beyond her duties to include every detail that would help me understand the things better.
She exceeded my expectations every single time! No matter how long it took, she has always been there to help me and she has been very patient and supportive. She has always gone the extra mile for me and it has paid off. Now I feel a lot more confident and even my friends and colleagues noticed. Her passion, energy, and devotion really sets her apart from the rest!”

--- Makarand Hazarika
Data Engineer
“Through working with Desirée, I have absolutely grown in my understanding and my ability to communicate clearly. This has helped me so much in my work, as I have gained the confidence to communicate effectively with all kinds of teams. I started losing my concerns about saying something wrong, and now every day I am challenging myself to speak up more and more. Desirée has the precision to go straight to where you have issues or problems, as well as being flexible and adjusting the format to fit my needs exactly. I would recommend working with her to everyone.”

--- Rodrigo Ribeiro
Director of Mobile Marketing

“Through this coaching, I have become more secure with my English in general. I feel that I have learnt more vocabulary and how to structure sentences. Speaking is becoming more clear and more natural for me. One important point has been to feel and assimilate the English language. Our sessions are definitely fun and yet structured. I love the way Desirée utilizes online tools to maximize the learning. This means I can read our notes later or on another day, I can review everything we discussed, and I can easily practice with another person. Also, I appreciate the way she provided accurate diagnosis of my learning needs and then worked directly on what I needed. The methodology worked very well for me, because everything was so well-organized. I'm thankful for how much all of this has helped me be less insecure in my English. However, most important for me has been the emotional support Desirée has offered during the learning process. I would absolutely recommend her services to both friends and my work partner and colleagues in Chile.”

--- Andres Gomes
Psychologist, Human Resources

“Desirée is a really good trainer because she understands the client’s needs and works exactly on those points. I recommend her services to anyone who wants to enhance their skills in the English language. She is without doubt the best coach I have ever worked with. For me, my favorite aspect is that she is extremely friendly and easy to talk to, and our sessions were always fun and made me laugh!”

--- Wagner Rocha
Novartis Pharmaceuticals

“I just want to take a moment to say thanks to you and English for life for the excellent training that was provided to our Queretaro office. I have only heard great comments from the Queretaro teams and our training manager about the training. Our management team can already see the communication gap closing between our customers and the CSR’s.”
“Hi Kim, Once again thanks for all. I am 100% happy. It has been a great experience for me.

Elisabeth and Karla are two high qualified “teachers,” capable of understanding my needs and adopting the right tools to make me improve my English knowledge. I have also enjoyed both from human point of view. I really invite Debbie (HR manager) to consider you as a preferred partner for Trelleborg Coated Systems US in that kind of training.”

--- Maurizio Avagnale
HR Vice President, Trelleborg Coated Systems

“I believe you all have so many resources . . . especially yourselves (!) . . . that our international students and our entire community could benefit from. Thanks so much for your time investment and high quality of services, and your genuine commitment to our students!

Honestly, while (the student) was willing to work very hard to make this semester as academically successful as possible, you and the English for Life Team deserve a great deal of credit for your expertise and professionalism. We are fortunate to have you all in our increasingly diverse community. You went way above and beyond to do the job right. I certainly look forward to working with you in the future!”

--- Dr. Lesley A. Quast
Assistant Dean for Advising & Professor of Education
Furman University

“English for Life is the recipient of our 2010 Community Service Award for outstanding commitment and dedication to the English learners and teachers in our community. We are thankful for the tutors and training they provide us, and we are happy to partner with them in the services we provide to the community.”

--- The Greenville Literacy Association

“Kim was a great instructor; she was able to teach while keeping things relevant and fun. I would recommend her to anyone.”

--- Inna Porter
Appendix C: Kim Carroll Resume

KIMBERLY M. CARROLL
105 Chalet PL; Greenville  SC  29607   USA
(864) 987 0067   kimcarroll@english-forlife.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Dynamic, results-oriented teacher, trainer, coach, and problem-crusher, specializing in helping learners meet and exceed their academic, professional, and personal goals both linguistically and culturally. Recognized for innovation and creativity, as well as creating a comfortable, challenging environment in which true communication and learning can happen. Excellent interpersonal and intercultural communication skills in English and proficiency in Spanish. Proven leader in training and among peers; easily interacts among executives, colleagues, clients, and students. Functional expertise includes: Curriculum Design and Training Development & Implementation (online and face-to-face) for diverse learners; Workshop Development for the Corporate Environment; In-Service & Pre-Service Teacher Education; and all aspects of small business operations including project development, marketing, and team management.

SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Teacher, Trainer, & Coach

• Created 130-hour graduate level TESOL Certification course to certify current and future teaching professionals to teach English abroad.

• Provided face-to-face and online trainings and workshops for over 600 teachers throughout South Carolina, and taught in diverse environments of adult education, community college, universities, private language schools, summer camps, and corporations.

• Contracted with Wofford College and others to ease the transition of international students through the development and implementation of International Student Orientations, Peer Mentoring programs, Faculty and Staff Workshops, and Academic English courses.

Cross-Cultural Communicator

• Organize and lead groups of North American participants for immersion courses in Quito, Ecuador each summer.

• Build and maintain professional cross-cultural partnerships with various organizations in Quito, Ecuador.

• Own and operate English for Life TESOL Training & Language supervising and training 15 contract teachers from 4 countries.

• Wrote and directed “Language, Culture, & Customer Service” training for international customer service representatives for Michelin Tire Corporation, Querétaro, Mexico.

Business & Administration

• 10+ years owning and operating two businesses to meet the linguistic and cultural needs of the Upstate and beyond.

• Implement or supervise all aspects of the business.

• Work independently from a home office, and maintain strategic partnerships in Greenville, Charleston, and Quito, Ecuador to run courses and training programs.
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Catalyst Intercultural, Greenville, SC 2015 - present
Providing training, coaching, and academic services in intercultural and English language training
Co-owner and Director, Chief Catalyst

• Train and coach organizations and individuals in intercultural communication, global leadership, and professional English

• manage day-to-day operations of a small business

ENGLISH for Life TESOL Training and Language Academy, Greenville, SC 2001 – Present
Leader in providing Language Learning Experiences and TESOL Certification to South Carolina and beyond.
Owner, Academic Director, ESL Teacher, & TESOL Trainer

• Hire, train, and manage staff of 8 language teachers and 11 Teacher Educators.

• Maintain professional partnerships with universities and ESL class providers around South Carolina.

• Design and teach classes to over 200 small groups and individuals from such institutions as Greenville County Schools, Furman University, Wofford College, Greenville Technical College, Milliken, Michelin, Cryovac, Draxlmaier Automotive, Hitachi, Bausch, and KS Gleiltnager.

• Collaborated with Handong University and Sunlin College to create Experience English Summer Camps in Pohang, South Korea, and Greenville, South Carolina for South Korean elementary schoolers.

• Designed and implemented the first independent TESOL Certification Course in the South, earning Graduate credit.

• Researched, wrote, and facilitated needs assessment, curriculum, course materials, and train-the-trainer materials and training for international Customer Service Representatives of Michelin Tire Corporation.

State Department of Education, SC, 2007 - Present
BEST Plus State Trainer, ESL Teacher Trainer

• Collaborated in the curriculum design and implementation of ESL Academy I and ESL Academy II, 3-credit courses for adult ESL teachers in the State of South Carolina, along with other online professional development workshops offered around the state.

• Offer professional development workshops for teachers including: Creativity in the Classroom; Second Language Acquisition; Planning, Managing, and Enjoying your Multilevel Class; Creating a Tutor Evaluation Process; Now We’re Talking: Pair and Grouping Strategies for the ESL Classroom; Hearing Voices: Using Oral Histories in your ESL Class; Get your Game Face On: Using Games in the ESL Classroom, Facilitating a Conversation Corner, Peer Mentor Training.

• Provide test administrator training and refresher courses to teachers in South Carolina on administering the Basic English Skills Test Plus.

• Serve on the Adult Education ESL Task Force for the State Department of Education of South Carolina.

Greenville Technical College, Greenville, SC 2010 - 2012
ESL Instructor

• Taught Intermediate Reading and Writing, and 2-semester American English Pronunciation courses
Lifelong Learning, Greenville County Schools, Greenville, SC 2000 – 2009
Adult ESL Instructor & Teacher Educator

- Taught Advanced Speaking and Listening Class, Advanced Reading Book Club, and Academic Writing
- Created and taught multi-level intermediate curriculum for classes meeting 20 hours per week.
- Taught over 4000 student-hours of class, and retained over 85% of students, coordinating and administering intake testing for Greenville County.
- Worked on a team of 4 to create and deliver *The South Carolina English Literacy Teachers’ Curriculum Guide*.

Inlingua International Language Training Center, Greenville, SC  April - August 2000
ESL Trainer

- Taught ESL, business English, and cultural adjustment training for corporate level internationals employed in the Upstate.

Greenville Literacy Association, Greenville, SC  1999 - 2000
VISTA Volunteer, ESL Program

- Taught beginning level ESL classes to over 200 people, assisting ESL Program Managers with student intake, training volunteers, and making community fundraising presentations.
- Managed all aspects of Talk Time Conversation Class recruiting and training volunteers, recruiting students, developing lessons and materials, and facilitating classes.

Center for Human, Civil, and Autonomous Rights, Bluefields, Nicaragua 1998
*Intern, Oral histories of Women Leaders of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua*

- Worked in English and Spanish with community leaders to train volunteers in oral history collection
- Used participatory approach to identify women leaders, collect and transcribe oral histories, and organize collection for local university library

EDUCATION

- Ongoing professional development in English Teaching, Teacher Training, Spanish, & business development.
- M. Ed in Divergent Learning, concentration in adult non-native English speakers; Columbia College, Columbia, South Carolina; 2008.
- Advanced TESL Certification; TESL Training Cooperative; Toronto, Ontario, Canada; 2003.
- Intensive Spanish Semester Abroad; Proyecto Linguistico Francisco Marroquin; Antigua, Guatemala; 1994.
Appendix D: Desiree Beauchamp Resume

DESIREE BEAUCHAMP
12101 Three Springs Trail, Greenville, SC 29615
Tel: (704) 678-1704; E-mail: beauchamp.desiree@gmail.com

KEY QUALIFICATIONS:
• Diverse and Flexible Director of Training with varied skill set in a wide range of applications including training, coaching, directing, business organization, leadership, and presentation.
• Over 12 years training and coaching experience, including program development.
• Over 10 years experience managing small business functions, including marketing, web and social media presence, resource management, team leadership, coordination, and organization.
• Effective and engaging communicator with a strong background in public speaking, presentation, and writing.
• Master's degree, professional coaching certification, and certification in various psychometric assessment tools.
• Proven track record of building efficient systems, ability to work without a net and create order out of chaos, with first-responder experience.
• Strong virtual work skills in all areas with experience training, coaching, managing, and coordinating virtually.
• Experience working with diverse populations in a wide variety of contexts; highly skilled and specialized in working in international and intercultural environments. Multinational work experience.
• Fluent in Portuguese with proficiency in German and Spanish.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
Lead Trainer, Co-founder and Director, Catalyst Intercultural, Greenville, SC 2015 - Present
• Coach and train adult professionals in leadership development, communications, and teambuilding, specializing in increasing performance across cultural boundaries
• Develop original training programs, materials, and curriculum to create solutions for language, culture, and communication challenges of individuals and organizations; face-to-face and online, domestically and internationally
• Lead business development and growth, create marketing and web materials, networking and contact development; coordinate and design social media marketing efforts
• Coordinate teams and subcontractors; organize business functions; manage time and assets; create effective, efficient systems for accomplishing objectives
• Maintain level of business functionality domestically, virtually, and globally.

Teacher, Trainer, Coach, Consultant, English for Life Language Academy, Greenville, SC 2012 – Present
• Coach and train expatriate adult professionals to improve cultural agility and global competency;
• Develop teaching skills of new teachers as part of graduate-level TESOL teacher-training and certification program, specializing in training cultural management skills, communication, and working with diverse learner populations
• Design and facilitate delivery of both in-person and distance learning programs

Language and Cultural Trainer, Intercultural Study Centre, São Paulo, SP, Brazil 2013 – 2015
• Provided cultural and professional coaching and communication training to Brazilian business executives
• Supported increased cultural adaptation and effectiveness; support intercultural competency development
• Designed and facilitated delivery of distance learning programs; design courses and trainings, evaluate and modify existing materials
• Led and participated in virtual teams, operating in the US and Brasil.
DESIREE BEAUCHAMP, (704) 678-1704, p. 2

Owner and Consultant, Horizon Dog Training, Greenville, SC 2007 – 2013
• Consulted one-on-one with and trained dog owners and related businesses and organizations to assess and identify behavioral challenges in dogs and build comprehensive plans for modifying, controlling, or dealing effectively with potential unwanted behaviors; coached clients extensively to successfully implement the plan
• Led business development and growth, organized business functions; managed time and assets; created effective, efficient systems for accomplishing objectives
• Developed all materials utilized to train clients, including presentations, workshops, training and course materials, and articles
• Created all web and marketing materials and emails; developed social media marketing

Middle School Asst. Teacher, Rutherford County Alternative High School, Rutherfordton, NC 2006
• Taught high-risk and behaviorally challenged students in grades 6-8, coordinating with regular school teachers and student-needs workers

4th Grade Asst. Teacher, State College Friends School, State College, PA 2004-2005
• Developed learning activities and emergent curriculum in all subjects, utilized a coaching and feedback system to encourage high performance; facilitated student-led consensual classroom management

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE
Media and Training Consultant, Greenville Humane Society, Greenville, SC (2012 – 2013)
• Served as media contributor, providing weekly live television news interviews and news articles about current dog-related issues in the community; created and presented seminars and workshops

• Led in-field first-response Search and Rescue teams and trained and handled SAR K9; maintained SAR technician, government emergency response, and first aid certifications; provided reliable debriefing, evaluation of mission success, and action recommendations for Incident Command.

Program Director: Foster and Transport, Rutherford County Animal Alliance, Rutherfordton, NC (2005-2007)
• Coordinated all aspects of a dog rescue organization's foster care program: coordinated care with foster homes and veterinary clinics; partnered with out-of-state rescue and no-kill shelters to transfer eligible dogs; organized transport for out-of-state rescues; cooperated with other program directors to organize public awareness and fundraising events; created website and promotional media materials
• Designed, managed, and implemented foster dog training programs; evaluated shelter dogs’ eligibility.

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS
• Master's Degree, Intercultural Relations, University of the Pacific and the Intercultural Communication Institute, Stockton, CA/Portland, OR; Pending Graduation 2016
  GPA: 4.0; Phi Kappa Phi.
• Bachelor’s Degree, English and History, Tarleton State University, Stephenville, TX; 2003: Outstanding Graduate, College of Liberal and Fine Arts;
  GPA: 4.0; Alpha Chi, Summa Cum Laude.
• Global Competencies Index Qualified Administrator, Kozai Group, Portland, OR; 2014.
• Certified Professional Coach, Life Coach Institute of Orange County, Costa Mesa, CA; 2014.
• TESOL Certificate, College of Charleston, via English for Life Academy, Greenville, SC; 2013
Appendix E: Sample Clients, Projects, and Partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Components</th>
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</thead>
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| Michelin Tire Corporation, Queretaro, Mexico | “Language, Culture, and Customer Service:” 12-hour training to improve intercultural communication between clients and customer service representatives | • Needs assessment  
• Course development  
• Materials development  
• Instruction  
• Train-the-trainer materials development  
• Train-the-trainer sessions |
| Cryovac Sealed Air              | 20 hour language and cultural intensive for international sales teams representing Europe and Asia | • Needs assessment  
• Course development  
• Materials development  
• Instruction |
| Handong University & Good Samaritan Hospital, Pohang, South Korea & Greenville SC | 20 day “Experience English” summer camps for South Korean elementary school children | • Course and materials development  
• Project management  
• Assistant teacher training  
• Instruction and evaluation  
• Host family recruitment and logistical planning |
Appendix F: Industry studies: Representation of International Business in Greenville and Greenville International Population
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Census 2000</th>
<th>Estimates 2008</th>
<th>Growth %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greenville's population</td>
<td>379,616</td>
<td>438,119</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign-born</td>
<td>18,420</td>
<td>31,733</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latin Origin</td>
<td>14,281</td>
<td>31,545</td>
<td>120.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
APPENDIX B: BRANDING FIRST LOOK
APPENDIX E: POSTER
APPENDIX E: TRAINING PLAN
Training Plan
What’s culture got to do with it?

Time: 50 minutes
Format: Training with presentation (Prezi)
Materials: Name tags, pens, workbook pages, Prezi, Catalyst postcards, index cards, feedback form, pre-survey, food and drinks

Objectives:
1. LWBAT define culture in a meaningful and personal way that expands beyond international differences
2. LWBAT define communication beyond language, including perception and behavior
3. LWBAT identify and differentiate direct and indirect communication styles
4. LWBAT analyze a case study and propose effective solutions
5. LWBAT evaluate a personal situation and propose effective solutions

Before beginning: (DESI & KIM)
- Hang chart paper for culture exercise
- Hang and label chart paper for direct/indirect exercise
- As participants arrive, distribute pre-survey, name tags, index cards, and pages from workbook.

Opening (KIM)
- Welcome
- location logistics
- Management: remind participants that we will proceed at a quick pace, to have fun, and hold all questions to the end (explain Parking Lot)
- Utilize Parking Lot technique for question management: participants should jot down questions on the provided index cards so they remember them, but hold them until the end of the training

- Introduction to Catalyst
- Prezi 3: Go through today’s agenda and review learning objectives.
- Prezi 4, 5: Benefits of effective intercultural skills

10 Mins: Introduction to Culture (KIM)
- Exercise: Everyone stand, and sit when this describes you: who is from another country? Who speaks another language? Who works at a company with headquarters or management in another country? Who is from outside of greenville? Who works with clients, colleagues, suppliers, contractors, etc, from another country? (everyone will be seated) Great! You’re all in the right place.
• Prezi 6 (1 click): So what is "culture?"
• Ask group: What does "culture" refer to? What does it mean? Let people volunteer answers. Ask questions to work towards deeper definitions.
• Prezi 6 (click through): Our definition of culture on the macro level refers to five key features.
• Prezi 7 (1 click): Explain -- Culture can refer to a country or language group, but can also be a much smaller group, like region/location, hobby, organization, generation.

• Exercise: Divide participants into small groups. Have groups work together to brainstorm as many different cultures they (collectively) are a part of. 3 MIN MAX

• Prezi 7 (click through): Did your cultures that you came up with fall into any of these categories?
• Point out that beyond the visible surface, culture dictates what we believe, how we think how we relate, and how we communicate. (“do New Yorkers communicate differently than Greenvillians? Do ____ communicate differently than _____?
• Tell example story of non-obvious culture playing a huge role in an outcome. (wkbk example is ending a meeting on time vs importance to the person)
• POINT OUT: We are all multi-faceted, and so are cultures

20 Mins: Intro to Communication (DESI)
• Prezi 9 (1 click)
• Ask: How does culture influence how we communicate? (possible answers: language, body language, space, eye contact).
• Prezi 9 (click through)
• Explain: Beyond that, there are also cultural communication styles. These are many different aspects of communication that have been identified and studied. All of them can be seen both among global cultures and within any individual culture itself, including U.S. American culture.
• Give VERY quick overview of different continuua, and remind participants we train these in full trainings
• Prezi 12: Lecture – Direct Communicators (examples)
• Prezi 13: Lecture – Indirect Communicators (examples)

• Exercise: Quickly ask participants to predict countries on a range
• Prezi 14: Country ranges – briefly explain
• Prezi 15 (1 click): Case study
• Go through case study. Have group identify the direct and indirect communicator

• Prezi 15 (Click through): Exercise – divide participants into small groups. Task: Assign groups a character. Have each group make 3 recommendations for their character to improve the situation
• Go back to whole group and take a look at answers
• Prezi 16: A few of our suggestions for direct (overview slide)
• Prezi 17: A few of our suggestions for indirect (overview slide)
• Prezi 18: A few quick caveats...

• Prezi 19: Exercise – Personal application. Explain and have them work with a partner.

40 mins: Closing (KIM)
• Homework: try some of these tools and see how it goes. We’re going to follow up with you and see how it works out.

• Reminder: they'll receive the workbook and poster to help guide them on their own
• Catalyst selling point regarding available trainings.
• Close: Thank you, quick questions for those who have time to stay.

FOR FEEDBACK GROUP: Stop training here and begin feedback process – distribute after survey, open floor for comments, etc.
APPENDIX F: POST CARD
APPENDIX G: CATALYST INTRODUCTION