

242 Section One *Core Leadership Communication*

current fiscal year, estimated by analysts to be in the range of \$18.5 million on revenues of \$390 million. Given the culture of PTI, you understand that securing payment from Congoil would be viewed very favorably and earn you additional status with your peers and superiors.

You decide to write to Syanga Rugeiro requesting immediate payment of the \$2.5 million. You have known Syanga for over seven years, and while you did not negotiate the original contract for the *OR*, you did negotiate the follow-on contract at the end of the first three years, when PTI agreed to reduce the original day-rate in exchange for the security afforded by a six-year extension. You feel that you know Syanga about as well as most Westerners get to know African officials, and you feel your relationship with him is sound. You know that he received his geology degree from the local university and later spent a year studying management at a British university. He speaks good English, and your business relations have been cordial. You have talked with him about his family and once even met his oldest son when Syanga brought him along on a business trip to Houston. He asked your assistance in getting the boy accepted into the engineering program at your undergraduate university, something you were happy to do.

Despite all these interactions with him, however, you have never felt that you understood Syanga very well. His Western education and business manner seem like a thin veneer over a much more substantial base of traditional African values and preferences. Your experience and some modest reading on the subject have indicated to you that the local West African culture is collectivist, high-context, high power distance, polychronic, and risk and uncertainty avoiding. Decision making requires consultation among all affected parties, but nothing happens until the highest-ranking official involved signals his approval. You realize you have drawn most of these assumptions from your reading, but you feel you have also seen some of it in Syanga's actions. You feel you need to appeal directly to him to pay the \$2.5 million owed to PTI.

You decide also to write to Amproco's assistant country manager, Carl Mouton, asking for his help in getting Congoil to pay PTI the \$2.5 million. You have met Carl on several occasions and have a number of common friends in the industry. Also, you have discussed the difficulties contractors can encounter doing business in West Africa. You believe that Carl might be able to influence Syanga to approve your request for payment.

The Assignment

In your role as PTI's vice president of operations, select the appropriate written media for this situation and for the cultures involved (consider text message, e-mail, or snail mail memo or letter) and write two correspondences responding to the situation described in the case:

1. To Syanga Rugeiro, requesting payment of the \$2.5 million owed PTI and
2. To Carl Mouton, asking for his assistance in persuading Syanga to pay.

In addition, write a short (one page maximum) explanation of your communication strategy and how your knowledge of intercultural communication issues influenced the decisions you made in organizing the information, expressing your ideas, and developing an appropriate style and tone. In your explanation, comment also on the choice of written media as appropriate for

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your communication. If given the option, would you choose a medium other than written to communicate these messages? Explain your response.

Syanga Rugeiro's address is 26-30 Avenida Presidente dos Santos, Dist. Norte 4, Kinuanda, Congola.

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Application 9.3
Preparing an
International
Briefing

For this assignment, you will work in groups to research, prepare, and deliver a 15-minute presentation with 5 minutes for questions and answers. The presentation will show how the culture of an individual nation or world region affects the local business environment and practices. As a starting point for your research and preparation, you should use the information in this chapter on cultural variables and determine the characteristics of your selected country against each variable. For example, is the country high- or low-context? How do they feel about power and equality? Your research should result in an international communication audit for the nation or region you select. In addition, you might want to look at the Web site of a global company that sells its products in many countries—Procter & Gamble, for example (www.pg.com/en_US/index.shtml).

Your group should develop its presentation with a specific business-related audience and purpose in mind; for instance, you might want to approach the presentation as a briefing for employees assigned to a newly acquired foreign subsidiary or a negotiating team about to embark on negotiations for an international merger. You should make your presentation appropriate in every respect to this specific audience. You may take a creative approach.

To promote breadth of learning and avoid repetition, each group is encouraged to select a different nation or region.

Application 9.4
Designing
International
Communication
Programs

For this assignment, you are to work in groups to select a country in which a currently established company is not marketing its products. For example, you might look at Dunkin' Donuts and decide to market it in Germany. Each group is to research, prepare, and deliver a presentation of 20 to 25 minutes, with 5 minutes for questions and answers, or 30 minutes total.

The presentation will describe your marketing plan for the introduction of your company's product or service into a country other than your own. Your primary objective is to show that you understand enough about the country and its culture to argue that the country will be a successful target market for the product or service that you have selected. The presentation will address the business opportunity (the market), your product or service, the competitive landscape, your positioning, and your communication strategy (paying special attention to cultural differences).

The overall purpose of the presentation is to showcase to your CEO and senior executive team your team's approach to promoting and marketing your selected product or service. They will want to see your rationale and your preliminary plan for introducing and marketing the product or service.

Your group must decide on (1) the company, (2) the product or service of that company, and (3) the country where the product/service will be introduced. You must be able to make a case for the introduction of your product