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Conditions of Success: a platform for international construction development

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Abstract

'Conditions of Success' (COS) was organised to study the internationalisation of the construction industry in 1989. At that time few companies, and even fewer researchers, were interested in international construction endeavours. The purpose of the study was to collect information on activities of the 1980s in order to project who might be successful and under what conditions would they be successful in the next century. Extensive interviews were conducted with 60 participating firms from seven countries. While this group has now been reduced to about 20 via mergers and acquisitions they have demonstrated the value of several of the recommendations from the study. Critical to the study was an Executive Symposium held in Stockholm in 1991 where executives presented their view of the future and how best to prepare for it. Professor Ranko Bon, of Reading University, played a pivotal role in this special Symposium, as chair of the diverse interests and adviser to organising the results. Ten major

recommendations are outlined in the paper. A critical distinction emerged from the study, which has grown in theoretical importance since 1991. It is between the North American, primarily Harvard-centric, strategic model for internationalisation and the relationship-building approach of Asia (initially Japanese and now Chinese). The Asian approach is closer to that of Europe and gaining in effectiveness and prominence over that of North America.

Keywords:

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