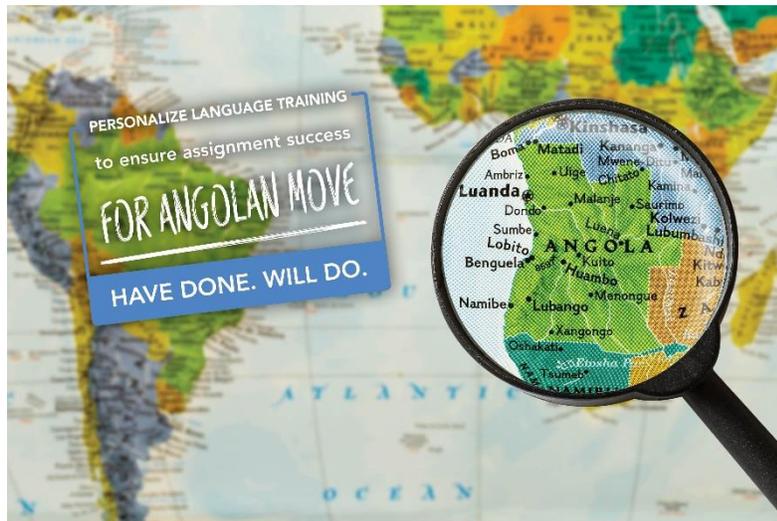


HAVE DONE. WILL DO.



FROM TEXAS TO AFRICA: CROSSING THE LANGUAGE BARRIER



When the regional president of a Texas-based oil company needed to relocate from Houston to the South African country of Angola, he faced a considerable challenge.

With **no familiarity with the language or culture, and just four months to learn enough to survive in Angola and interact with his staff** once he arrived, Cartus Director of Intercultural and Language Solutions, Amy, and Consulting Manager, Matt, knew their team needed to build something unique to generate a successful outcome. This meant not only gaining a working fluency in the language, but understanding that language by itself, without knowledge of a cultural context,

can cause issues. The executive needed to understand the nuances of local interaction since it was critical for him to be seen as an effective leader and not as a foreigner who didn't 'get' the culture.

The team's solution: create a highly customized and culture-focused hands-on immersion program for the executive, with a diverse and strategic array of tools at his disposal.

One of the biggest hurdles was his extremely busy schedule, so Amy and Matt scheduled virtual sessions with a trainer — powered by Learnship — that he could take right in his office to learn the basics of Angolan Portuguese. Bolstering this strategy, they also set the executive up with self-paced tools, like flash cards and mobile apps, that helped reinforce the linguistic fundamentals while he was home, taking a business flight, or waiting at a restaurant.

With a foundation established, Amy and Matt's team launched the next step. Since the single best way to learn a language is to be immersed in a linguistic environment, the executive was paired with a personal language trainer for two intensive weeks. He spent half of each day in a classroom, and half of each day interacting only with other Portuguese speakers: ordering in cafes, reading street signs and train schedules, and engaging in practical scenarios.

Importantly, Amy and Matt ensured that Angolan culture formed a central component of his training. This was pivotal to both understanding the country he was moving to and his role there as a company leader. The executive was taught that Angolan companies consider themselves families, maintaining eye contact and offering a lengthy handshake are essential in gaining trust, and how important it is to never criticize someone publicly, since Angolans place great value on "saving face."

The creative mixture of customized strategies provided the executive with a wealth of learning opportunities despite a short lead-time. The four-month crash-course led to a successful, and well-prepared, transition to his new role in a new country.

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