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# Foreword

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*By Tom Sager, former senior vice  
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In 1802, E. I. duPont founded a gun powder manufacturing site on the banks of the Brandywine River in Wilmington, Delaware. Concerned that they might encounter opposition to their enterprise by a populace who might perceive the duPont family as French anarchists, E. I. and his father Samuel sought out a lawyer who could assist them to avoid prejudice and a possible business failure. That lawyer was Alexander Hamilton, a Wall Street attorney with outstanding credentials and extensive contacts.

But what truly differentiated Hamilton was the fact that he spoke their language—French. And he understood their customs, priorities, and decision-making processes. Hamilton’s mastery of the French language and intercultural knowledge helped immeasurably in gaining their trust and confidence.

Now let us fast forward to the 21st century. The lesson from the Hamilton retention is even more compelling for today’s corporate counsels or their outside counterparts who seek to represent MultiNational Corporations (MNCs) like DuPont. In the case of DuPont, it has survived and thrived for over 200 years by successfully adapting to a dynamic and rapidly changing global marketplace.

At the time of my retirement from DuPont as General Counsel in 2014, the company had grown from 40 employees with one site and one product in one country in 1802 to 64,000 employees with 300 sites in 90 countries throughout the world. And in 2014, two-thirds of our revenue was generated *outside* of the United States.

Our basic strategy in serving our corporate clients within these key markets was to hopefully identify lawyers who could help us navigate and develop sustainable relationships with potential business partners, customers, and suppliers. This required far more than excellent legal acumen. It required a capability to communicate with diverse audiences, a deep understanding of the parties’ cultural values, and a keen appreciation as to how they would negotiate.

Unfortunately, we did not have the benefit of Terri Morrison’s *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands: Courtrooms to Corporate Counsels*. As the adage goes,

“You don’t know what you don’t know.” This fascinating in-depth study demonstrates the value of understanding diverse cultures, verbal and non-verbal communication patterns, and decision-making processes—and how they may unfold in different countries. This book would have greatly assisted DuPont Legal and its outside lawyers in focusing far more effectively on what can hinder or advance desired business relationships or outcomes for our clients.

We do not all need to share the same cultural values, negotiating styles or priorities. But successful attorneys do need to understand those variables.

I honestly believe that this publication should be on the desk of every legal practitioner who is tasked and challenged to provide the best possible advice and representation for diverse clients, or for clients seeking to do business with diverse parties.

As we were frequently heard to say at DuPont, “We need to speak the language of business.” Alexander Hamilton was able to speak it in two languages. His legal and cultural skills earned the duPont’s trust in the 1800s. You’ve got the legal skills. Let *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands: Courtrooms to Corporate Counsels* give you the intercultural skills to earn your multinational clients’ trust in this century.