



Attention: Defne Bař
University: Istanbul Bilgi University
Professor: Serdar Karabati
Country: Turkey
Email: defne.bas@bilgiedu.net
Track: 2025-2b



3 January 2026

Dear Defne,

The X-Culture 2025-2 round is over.

In this package, you will find:

1. Your personal (confidential) performance review;
2. Your recommendation letter;
3. The suggested wording for how you can add the X-Culture experience to your CV/resume and how you can list it on LinkedIn and other social media;
4. A list of other opportunities with X-Culture;
5. Your X-Culture Certificate.

1. PERSONAL CONFIDENTIAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

First, here is your personal confidential performance review. It is an honest multi-dimensional review of your performance that not only provides an evaluation of your work in general but also indicates how your performance compares to that of other X-Culture students.

Please do not get upset if some of your numbers are low. We hope you recognize that honest feedback, even when critical for some students, helps you identify areas for improvement.

This is your personal and private performance review. We do not share it with anyone else. It is for you and you only so that you can use it for personal development.

Below are the average evaluations and feedback on your report. Each report was independently evaluated by several (3 to 8) professors. The numbers below are the overall averages across all professors.

Please note that the reports were evaluated on a **7-point scale**, where 1=very poor; 2=poor quality; 3=acceptable; 4=satisfactory; 5=good; 6=very good; and 7=outstanding.

Team #: 186

- Executive Summary (average across all teams 5.0): 5.0
- Block 1: Market and Competition (average across all teams 5.2): 5.0
- Block 2: Marketing Strategy (average across all teams 4.9): 5.0
- Block 3: Operations Management (average across all teams 4.9): 4.3
- Economic Viability of Proposal (average across all teams 4.9): 5.0
- Supporting Arguments (average across all teams 5.0): 5.0
- Formatting quality, visual appeal, clarity of explanation, and strength of the supporting arguments (average across all teams 5.1): 5.0
- Creativity of ideas (average across all teams 5.0): 5.0

REPORT SCORE (average across all teams 5.0): 4.6

If you want to know how your team compares to other 1,200 highly skilled and competitive X-Culture teams that took part in this round of the competition, you were in the Top 74.5%, or your report is better than 25.5% of other submissions this semester.

The business proposals that the X-Culture participants had to develop were highly complex. They were not of the “2+2=?” kind, where there is a clear, correct answer. The X-Culture challenges can be solved in multiple ways, and there is no way to confidently say a particular proposal is either “right” or “wrong.” Depending on their experience and understanding of market conditions, different experts may evaluate the same answer differently.

To give you an idea of how consistent the evaluations across experts were, we calculated the expert agreement score. An agreement score of 0.0 means that every reviewer gave your report exactly the same grade. An agreement score around 1.0 means that the reviewers were generally consistent, but some reviewers provided somewhat higher scores than others. An agreement score closer to 2.0 means that the reviewers had significant disagreements about the quality of your work, and some gave you high scores, while others gave you low scores.

The inter-rater agreement score for your report is:

Some appraisers also jotted down some quick comments on your work. Please note that these comments are not intended as developmental feedback but only the notes professors provided while reading your report. So, the language can be harsh sometimes, and often, these are just short notes, not full, detailed sentences. Do not expect encouraging comments, praise, and suggestions for improvement. These are just reactions and quick responses professors jotted down to explain their grading.

Solid report with strong Brazil focus, detailed competitor analysis, clear entry mode via partnerships, and good logistics/legal considerations. Promotion channels and messaging are well-outlined, with a missing flyer/ ad sample mock-up. Pricing and product features could use more depth and visuals. HR is present but generic. Overall well-formatted with tables; refine for more innovation to reach client-ready status.

As for your personal peer evaluations, your team members evaluated your performance *after the semester ended* as follows:

Peer-evaluated performance:

Evaluated on a **5-point** scale where 1=very bad, 2=bad, 3=acceptable, 4=good, 5=excellent.

- Effort (cohort average: 3.9): 4.3
- Intellectual contribution (cohort average: 3.8): 3.7
- Leadership skills (cohort average: 3.4): 4.0
- Collegiality and positive attitude (cohort average: 4.3): 4.7
- Overall peer evaluations (cohort average: 3.9): 4.2
- Peer-evaluated English proficiency (cohort average: 4.4): 4.0
- Peer-evaluated technical skills (cohort average: 3.9): 4.0

Please note that these numbers may be slightly lower than what you saw in your weekly peer evaluations. We noticed that many students tend to give higher evaluations to their team members during the semester to “keep everyone happy,” but give lower evaluations in the final post-project survey after they no longer have to worry about their team members retaliating with low peer evaluations. On average, weekly peer evaluations are around 4.0 (out of 5.0) during the semester, whereas they drop to about 3.8 in the post-project evaluation round.

Additionally, some of your team members left some comments about your performance. We hesitated whether to share them, but felt these comments could be developmental, insightful, and informative. We decided to share them, but first we anonymized them, without indicating who exactly said what; just a general aggregation.

She was super nice and fun to work with! She was a good communicator and always asked questions and sought help when needed. | Very helpful | Always present and work well

Compared to the other 6,500+ participants this semester, your individual performance was better than that of 48.7% of the other project participants, or it was in Top 51.3%.

Again, remember you were competing against highly qualified students from top universities worldwide. Even those at the bottom of this group probably performed much better than a regular person. Thus, a low number does not mean your performance was poor, but only that other X-Culture students did even better.

Also, note that, on average, students evaluated themselves 0.8 points higher than their peers did. For example, students who felt they deserved 4.7 tended to get only 3.9 from their peers. The same is true in reverse. Students whom YOU gave, for example, 3.5, probably felt they deserved 4.3. This tendency is called the “self-serving bias.” We tend to evaluate ourselves more favorably and others less favorably. This creates a discrepancy between self and peer evaluations. This discrepancy is especially large in virtual teams, where team members have few opportunities to observe their peers working on the project directly.

Our research also shows that people tend to underestimate their team members’ performance and overestimate their own. Almost all students rate themselves higher than they rate their team members, evidently thinking they work harder than their peers. Please keep that in mind when you interpret the peer evaluations you received from your team members.

So, if you feel the evaluations you received from your team members are too low, do not get upset. It is a common tendency to undervalue others’ work and overvalue our own. You likely gave your team members lower scores than they thought they deserved. This is just how people evaluate each other.

I hope you find this review fair and developmental.

If you would like to respond to this review, please [use this online form](#).

2. YOUR RECOMMENDATION LETTER

(next page)

3 January 2026

Subject: Reference Letter for Defne Bař



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Defne Bař participated in the 2025-2 round of the X-Culture international business consulting program (X-Culture International Business Consulting Certificate number 20252B05561).

X-Culture is a large-scale international experiential learning and business consulting project.

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Since its inception in 2010, more than 132,000 students have participated.

Each year, over 10,000 MBA and business students from more than 160 universities in 70 countries across six continents complete the program.

Participants work in global virtual teams, with each member located in a different country. Collaborating across cultures, time zones, and communication platforms, teams develop comprehensive international business consulting reports for real client companies.

The core task involves developing an international market expansion strategy. This includes analyzing the client company's competitive position, strengths and weaknesses, and external opportunities and threats. Students identify the most promising markets and conduct in-depth economic, cultural, and political analyses. They then formulate market entry strategies, pricing and promotion plans, HR and operations management solutions, and recommendations for product and logistics adaptations tailored to the selected markets.

Prior to the project, students complete rigorous training on online collaboration tools, international team dynamics, cross-cultural communication, and conflict resolution. During the semester, they attend live webinars with the CEOs and executives of the client companies. Select teams are also invited to present their findings and receive direct feedback from professors and company leaders.

We rigorously measure and compare the students' performance and rate them on over a dozen performance indicators, including peer evaluations, report quality, timeliness, creativity, and more. This is an excellent work sample, as performance in X-Culture is likely a good predictor of performance in jobs that require teamwork, cross-cultural interactions, and analytical and research skills.

Our records of **Defne Bař**'s performance over the several months of X-Culture are provided below.

Global Virtual Team Aptitude Test: Successfully Passed.

Before the project started, each student had to complete a rigorous global virtual team aptitude test. We measured knowledge of online collaboration tools, the ability to work with information, understanding of teamwork principles, challenges, and best practices of international collaboration, and English language skills.

Defne Baş has successfully completed the pre-project training and passed the Global Virtual Team Aptitude Test.

Notably, these test results were among the highest (Top 40%) in the cohort of 6,000+ students who took the test this semester.

Diligence and Ability to Meet Deadlines: Very high.

Peer-Evaluated Performance and Potential:

(1=very bad, 2=bad, 3=acceptable, 4=good, 5=excellent)

- Effort (cohort average: 3.9): 4.3
- Intellectual contribution (cohort average: 3.8): 3.7
- Leadership skills (cohort average: 3.4): 4.0
- Collegiality and positive attitude (cohort average: 4.3): 4.7
- Overall peer evaluations (cohort average: 3.9): 4.2
- Peer-evaluated English proficiency (cohort average: 4.3): 4.0
- Peer-evaluated technical skills (cohort average: 3.9): 4.0

Overall peer evaluations: 4.2

These are not only strong results and excellent peer evaluations, but they also place you among the top 30% of a highly skilled and competitive cohort of X-Culture students, likely even higher compared to the general population.

The students also rated each team member's role on the team. The results showed that Defne Baş was the team's a reliable team member who may not have sought a leadership role but could be counted on to complete tasks effectively.

Expert-Evaluated Ability to Solve Complete Problems:

Each international team completed a consulting project for a real international company and developed an international market entry strategy. Several International Business professors and industry experts evaluated each consulting report. Below are the expert evaluations of the consulting project developed by Defne Baş's team.

(1=very bad, 2=bad, 3=acceptable, 4=not bad, 5=good, 6=very good, 7=excellent)

- Executive Summary (average across all teams 5.2): 5.0
- Block 1: Market and Competition (average across all teams 5.1): 5.0

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- Block 2: Marketing Strategy (average across all teams 4.9): 5.0
 - Block 3: Operations Management (average across all teams 5.0): 4.3
 - Economic Viability of Proposal (average across all teams 4.9): 5.0
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 - Creativity of ideas (average across all teams 5.0): 5.0

REPORT SCORE (average across all teams 5.1): **4.6**

Recommendation:

Based on my thorough review and comparison of Defne Başı's performance with that of other teams and students who participated in X-Culture this semester, I can confidently recommend this individual for positions that require effective teamwork, particularly in cross-cultural virtual environments.

I also can very confidently recommend Defne Başı for roles that demand strong analytical, research, and writing skills, such as those required in business consulting.

Given the depth of learning and experience gained through the X-Culture Project, I anticipate even stronger performance from Defne Başı in future similar projects.

If past performance is any indication, it is my assessment that Defne Başı will do well on future team-based international business consulting projects.

Most sincerely,



Dr. Vas Taras
Professor of International Business and Department Chair
Department of Management
Bryan School of Business and Economics
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
X-Culture Project Founder and Director
Vice President – Administration, Academy of International Business
Fellow of the Academy of International Business, Southeast USA
www.X-Culture.org

3. SUGGESTED WORDING FOR LISTING YOUR X-CULTURE EXPERIENCE ON YOUR CV/RESUME, LINKEDIN, AND SOCIAL MEDIA

CV/Resume

- Position: International Business Consultant
- Term: August-December, 2025
- Responsibilities:
 - Conducted competitive analysis
 - Analyzed international target markets and trade regulations
 - Developed an international market expansion strategy, including:
 - Strategic analysis and market entry recommendations
 - Marketing and promotional planning
 - HR/personnel strategy (if applicable)
 - Logistics management (if applicable)
 - Finance and banking considerations (if applicable)
 - Product adaptation for the new market (if applicable)
 - Managed project deliverables and timelines
 - Collaborated in a global virtual team
 - Presented the final consulting report and recommendations to the client
 - If applicable: Led and coordinated a global virtual team as team leader
- Reason for leaving: Successful project completion
- Note: To avoid confusion, list X-Culture as your “consulting client”, not “employer”, as you technically were not employed by X-Culture, but rather offered your services as an independent unpaid consultant.

LinkedIn

You may list your X-Culture experience as a job under the title “International Business Consultant” from August to December 2025.

You can also upload a scan of your X-Culture certificate (available at the end of this document) in the Experience or Featured section of your profile.

Feel free to tag X-Culture ([linkedin.com/company/x-culture](https://www.linkedin.com/company/x-culture)) or Vas Taras ([linkedin.com/in/vastaras/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/vastaras/)) or request an endorsement.

Other social media

Feel free to describe and share a copy of your X-Culture certificate and describe your X-Culture experience in your own words. You can tag X-Culture and/or Vas Taras for endorsement. We often feature the most compelling stories and videos on our official pages to help promote your professional brand – so if your content is good, we will promote it via our channels.

YouTube: [youtube.com/@XCultureEducation](https://www.youtube.com/@XCultureEducation)

Facebook: [facebook.com/XCultureProject](https://www.facebook.com/XCultureProject)

Instagram: [instagram.com/xculture.project](https://www.instagram.com/xculture.project)

4. OTHER OPPORTUNITIES WITH X-CULTURE

- X-Culture Coaching Program: https://x-culture.org/for_coaches/
- X-Culture Global Symposium: <https://x-culture.org/category/meetings/>
- **Become an X-Culture Business Liaison/
Help businesses expand into new markets:**
If you can think of a company that might benefit from the power of the bright ideas of thousands of business students worldwide, connect us. This is a great way to impress the company management.
<https://x-culture.org/for-businesses/>
- X-Culture research: <https://x-culture.org/for-researchers/>
(particularly useful if you're planning to do a PhD degree or aspire to a research-related career otherwise)
- X-Culture for teenagers (if you have siblings or friends ages 14-18):
<https://x-culture.org/academy/>
- Sponsor X-Culture:
 - Buy me a coffee: a small one-time donation buymeacoffee.com/xculture
 - Major sponsors: x-culture.org/sponsor-x-culture



INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CONSULTING CERTIFICATE

20252B05561

awarded to

DEFNE BAŞ

who successfully completed the X-Culture Global Collaboration and International Business Consulting Program, which included theoretical training and practical experience as an international business consultant and active member of a Global Virtual Team that developed an international market expansion strategy for a client company, collaborating with over 6,165 students from 162 universities across more than 50 countries on six continents.



December 23, 2025

Vas Taras
Dr. Vas Taras, Founder