



# EXECUTIVE TOOLKIT FOR CULTURAL ANALYSIS

Navigating International Business Culture



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# CULTURAL ANALYSIS TOOLKIT

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## INTRODUCTION

The contents of this document was developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

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## OVERVIEW

The needs of people operating in the global environment have evolved dramatically in recent decades. Whether they work in the U.S. or abroad, businesspeople interact with individuals, teams, and organizations whose perspectives and approaches are shaped by cultural norms different from their own. In undertaking this project, we spoke with many businesspeople who described the importance of skills for approaching a new environment analytically, assessing current conditions and problems accurately, identifying needed and appropriate actions, and implementing effectively.

The Cultural Assessment Toolkit is intended to facilitate this sort of thinking. It has been our goal to offer a set of tools to help users become cultural investigators, establish cultural self-awareness, recognize differences from their own preferences in a new environment, predict challenges and overcome difficulty. We wanted the tools to be easy to use with minimal introduction and supervision, and to be applicable to any new cultural environment throughout the user’s career.

The cultural features used here were taken from existing frameworks. Scholars in intercultural communication have proposed a number of these to account for the ways in which cultures differ. They are often used to characterize the cultural tendencies of countries around the world. Culture varies considerably within any country, however, and businesspeople may need to operate effectively in a city, region or company that doesn’t conform to the general pattern. The *Cultural Analysis Toolkit* reframes cultural parameters taken from these frameworks within in a methodology for assessing a new environment, predicting challenges in the new context and developing appropriate strategies for achieving goals.

By observing human behavior, written expression and physical aspects of a new environment, users can identify cultural features and create a multi-parameter cultural profile for it. This technique can be applied to a country, region, city, company, division, work group, etc. Once users understand the new environment, they can predict the challenges they will face there based on comparison with their own preferences, and adopt strategies for functioning there successfully.

The purpose of the *Cultural Analysis Toolkit* is to create the links in this chain, from investigation to adaptation. It makes use of cultural features adapted primarily from work by Edward T. Hall (1959) and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998). It also draws on the work of Craig Storti and Richard D. Lewis. Recommended reading by these authors is provided at the end of the toolkit.

## CULTURAL FRAMEWORKS

Scholars have proposed a number of frameworks, which correspond fairly closely to one another, that describe how culture shapes human behavior and perception. The features, in most cases, are expressed as two ends of a continuum, with each end representing a way of thinking that, while reasonable and appropriate to its own system, conflicts with that at the other end. An example is the “Universalist/Particularist” continuum that refers to people’s attitudes towards authority and rules. Universalists believe that in general, everyone should follow rules all the time to ensure stability and predictability, whereas Particularists believe that exceptions to rules should be made based on situational factors (“I’m in a hurry, this rule isn’t very important, the situation has changed”, etc.) to allow for fluctuating conditions. Each approach is philosophically reasonable and appropriate to the context in which the people who prefer it operate; however, when people from the poles interact, conflict can result.

We have chosen the features used here for ease of comprehension and use in investigation, and some are modified from their original formulation for purposes of this application. Hall’s “Low/High-Context” dimension is simplified somewhat and referred to as “Indirect/Direct” approaches to dealing with conflict. A dimension similar to Trompenaars/Hampden-Turner’s “Specific/Diffuse” is named “Task/Relationship” here, and discussed primarily in terms of partnerships and communication. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner’s “Short-Term/Long-Term” dimension is discussed here in terms of strategy, with “Schedule/Flow” terminology used to refer to time management and project planning.

The cultural parameters used in each section of this document are listed below, in order:

Achievement/Birthright approaches to status	Short-Term/Long-Term orientations to strategy
Universalist /Particularist attitudes towards authority	Indirect/Direct methods of dealing with conflict
Relationship/Task emphasis on relationships vs. logic	Neutral/Expressive conveyance of emotion
Individualist/Collectivist approaches to responsibility and reward	Schedule/Flow-oriented approaches to time management

For each cultural dimension, the following are provided:

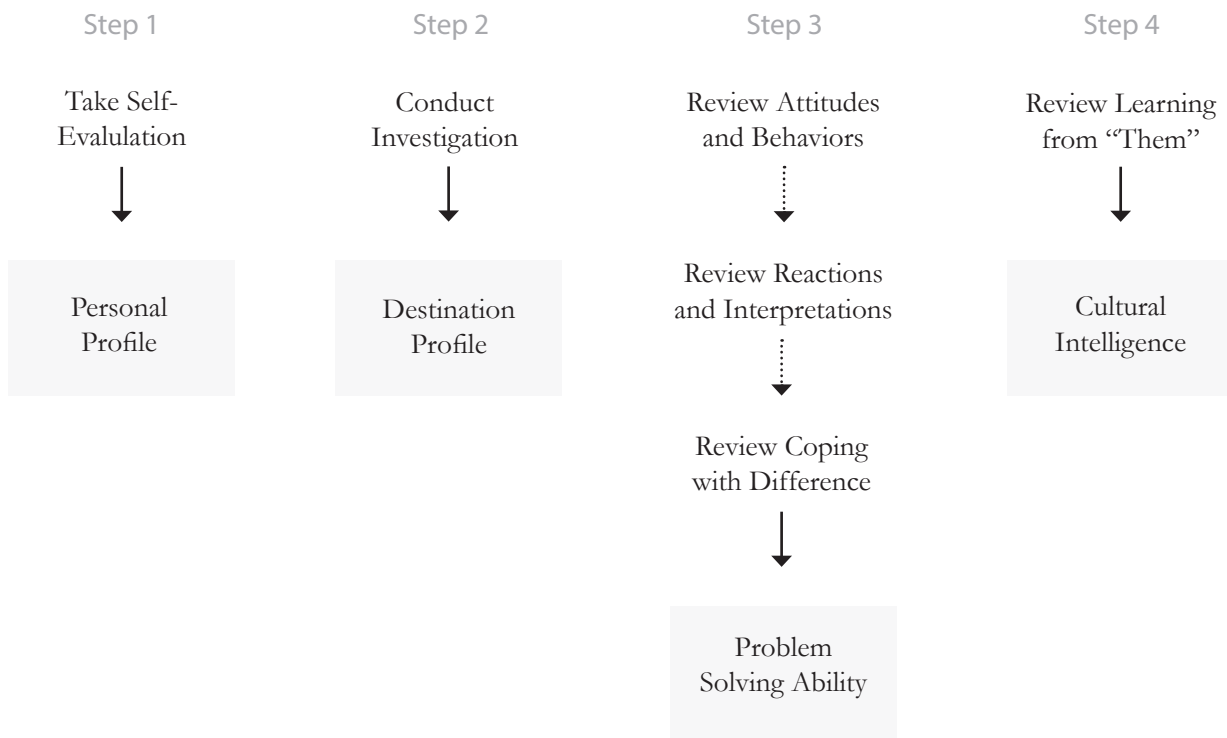
1. A self-test to identify your own preferences for the set of parameters and predict your attitudes towards the opposite tendencies.
2. A description of the parameters and the preferences and behaviors associated with each end of the continuum that also explains how they are manifested in business.
3. Instructions for data gathering to create the cultural profile of a new environment with respect to each set of cultural parameters.
4. An inventory of behaviors and attitudes you can expect in the environment based on the profile you have developed.
5. A list of common reactions and interpretations of people at each end of the continuum when working with one another—the way you are likely to feel about their behavior and vice versa.
6. Strategies for anticipating and coping with conflict and frustration
7. Strategies for explaining your own system, ways to profit from the strengths of people at the opposite ends of the dimensions from you, and ways to frame your requests and arguments in terms of the others’ cultural priorities.



## CULTURAL PROFILE METHODOLOGY

While many cultural training seminars emphasize awareness of cultural differences, few provide detailed instructions for how to deal with those differences in business interaction. The goal of this project is to take you beyond intercultural awareness and offer you a basis for assessing a new environment, then anticipating, analyzing and addressing cultural behaviors you encounter there. Information is provided about the feelings and frustrations that result from interaction between people from the ends of each continuum and suggest strategies to help you predict and manage conflict while learning from and capitalizing on features of the new environment.

### Process For Using The Cultural Assessment Toolkit



## INSTRUCTIONS: ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY FOR EACH SET OF CULTURAL PARAMETERS

### Self-Analysis

Take the *Self-Test* for each feature and chart your own cultural profile on page 30. Understanding your own cultural bias will help you predict difficulty with new environments.

### Feature Review

Become familiar with the eight cultural features by reviewing the *Cultural Behaviors and Attitudes* section. Refer to this section to understand approaches to and expectations of business interaction that are different from your own.

### Analysis

Use the *Gathering Data* section to identify questions to ask yourself as you assess a new environment.

Refer to the *Constructing Your Analysis* section for tips on traps to avoid and ways to cross-check your impressions

Construct a cultural profile of the new environment based on your research.

### Problem Solving

Refer to the *Reactions and Interpretations* section to predict how you would perceive the behavior of those with different cultural profiles from your own and how you would be perceived by them.

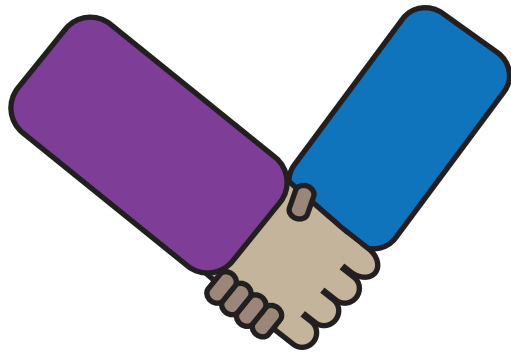
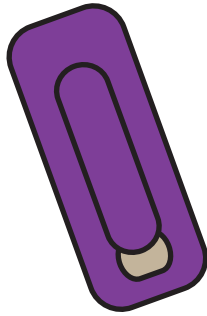
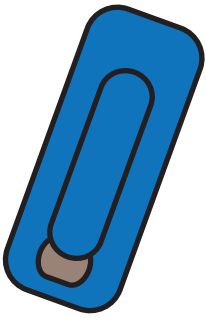
Refer to the *Coping with Differences* section to develop strategies for managing any differences you encounter.

### Gaining Cultural Intelligence

Consult the *Learning from "Them"* section to refine your sense of what people in new types of environment would have to offer you, how to explain yourself to them and how to frame requests and arguments in terms that would be compelling to them.

### Further Research

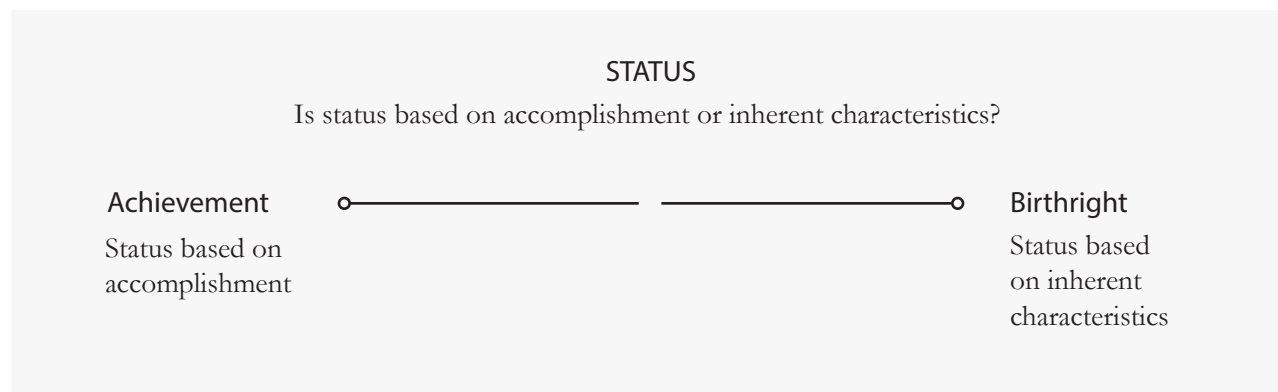
Refer to the *Resource List* for additional information.



BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES



## ACHIEVEMENT AND BIRTHRIGHT: ATTITUDES TOWARDS STATUS



### Self-Assessment: What's Your Bias?

Consider these statements:

1. A person from a good background is most likely to contribute as an employee and a member of society. People who fight their way to the top will be focused on their own success, and will have less graciousness and sophistication. Leadership skills take time to develop and come with age and experience.
2. A person from a good background is most likely to contribute as an employee and a member of society, although these attributes can be found in others as well. Talented people should be encouraged, while learning graciousness and sophistication. Leadership skills take time to develop, although some people will acquire them faster than others.
3. People with natural ability and initiative can come from any background, and their excellence should be recognized and developed through careful mentoring. Talented people will develop leadership skills relatively rapidly.
4. People should be judged based on their talent and initiative. A person who's born at the top may get by in spite of being lazy and unmotivated, but a person starting out with less will be skilled at persevering and overcoming obstacles, and people with these traits can be leaders at any age.

#### Interpretation

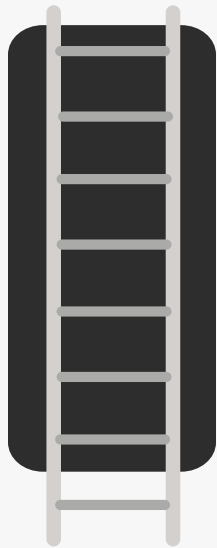
1. Indicates a strong Birthright bias.
2. Reflects a Birthright orientation with recognition of merit as a criterion.
3. Indicates an Achievement orientation with recognition of Birthright preferences for seniority.
4. Indicates a strong Achievement bias.

The Achievement/Birthright continuum describes attitudes towards the way status is conferred.

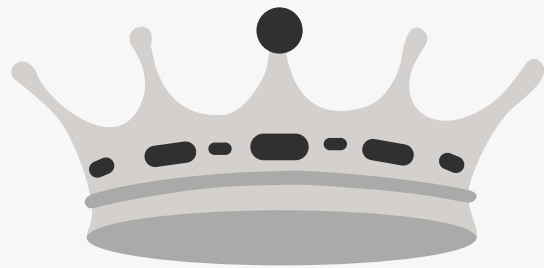
In Achievement-oriented cultures, an individual's personal accomplishments are the basis for status. An example is U.S. athletic or celebrity culture, where someone can be at the height of popularity one year and virtually unheard of the next.

In Birthright cultures, status is conferred based on inherent characteristics, such as family of birth, political party affiliation or age rather than personal accomplishment. An example is a culture in which top management positions in even large companies are often held by members of the founding family. Below is a brief characterization of each system.

Achievement



Birthright



**ACHIEVEMENT****BIRTHRIGHT****Perspectives, Motivations and Goals**

Status is conferred based on accomplishment.	Status is conferred based on background, connections, experience.
Respect for superiors is based on results and professional competence.	Respect for superiors is a way of showing identification with the organization.
A person's perceived value is based on his/her talent, initiative and accomplishments.	A person's perceived value is based on his/her influence with others due to seniority, connections and credentials.
An individual's history of accomplishing important goals is valued.	Titles, indicating status and position in the organization, are valued.
People strive to achieve a high status in their lifetime.	People strive to live up to the high status bestowed upon them.
People tend to believe that older managers are out of touch.	People tend to believe that young leaders are lacking in experience and sophistication.
People may feel impatient when dealing with others with connections or seniority rather than expertise.	People may feel insulted when paired with talented counterparts lacking in experience or lineage.

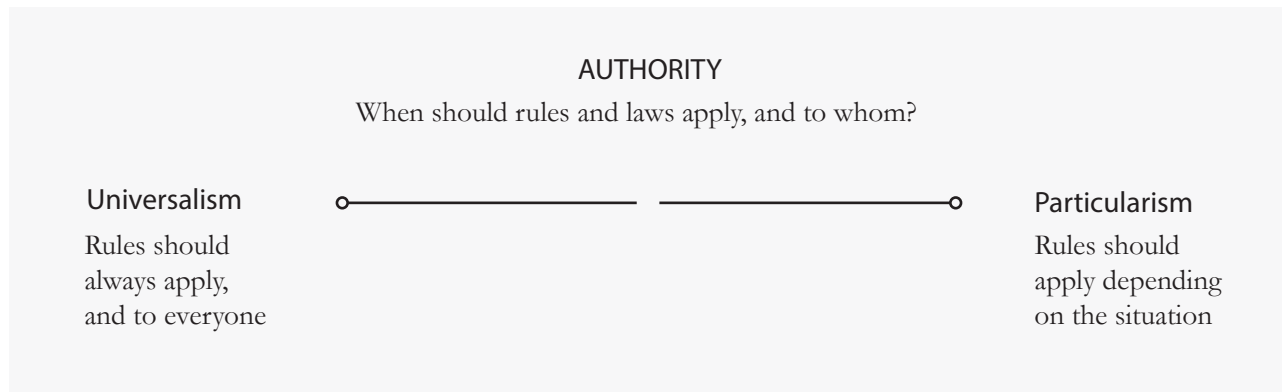
**Behavior and Communication**

Limited use of titles during interaction.	Heavy use of titles and professional qualifications during interaction.
Juniors and seniors interact freely.	Juniors show deference; seniors take a parental role.
Each party may speak at length on topics they are knowledgeable about.	Juniors speak less; seniors' comments are viewed as more valuable.
Input is designed to convey information efficiently; feelings are secondary.	Input is designed to honor age and titles—mistakes aren't pointed out to superiors.
Concrete examples and data are emphasized in presentations.	History and context are emphasized in presentations.
Value function over form; the terms of the deal are more important than interpersonal relations.	Value form over function; conveying respect for status is a critical aspect of cementing a deal.

**Structures and Processes**

Age and gender of managers depends primarily on individual track record.	Majority of managers are older men.
Decision-making is decentralized.	Decision-making is centralized.
Teams are made up of specialists and experts.	Teams are made up of generalists and seniors.
Rewards are based on performance.	Rewards are based on position.
Job descriptions and evaluation criteria are specific and detailed.	Job descriptions and evaluation criteria are general and fluid.
Pay is a function of growth through skill acquisition.	Pay is a function of growth through promotions.
Limited distinction between levels of status other than salary.	Status-based benefits (company car, expense account, executive rest rooms, etc.).

## UNIVERSALISM AND PARTICULARISM: ATTITUDES TOWARDS AUTHORITY



### Self-Assessment: What's Your Bias?

Consider these statements:

1. In any business deal, it's vital to have a detailed contract to make sure each partner's interests are protected. Risk is managed by factoring in assigning rewards and penalties to projected outcomes. By signing a contract, each side knowingly assumes risk and must be prepared to abide by its terms. In business, there are winners and losers; that's just how it is.

2. In any business deal, well-written contracts help protect each partner's interests. Risk is partially managed by factoring in potential liabilities, although if one party suffers unduly from unexpected factors, accommodations should be considered. Once a contract is signed, it should be honored except in extraordinary cases. In business, there are winners and losers; that's just how it is.

3. Business deals are a basis for developing relationships that support each partner's interests, with legal structures as a safeguard. Since no contract can predict all eventualities, it's best to word them generally. Risk is managed through mutual accommodation. If changes cause one partner to suffer excessively after a contract is signed, the other should consider offsetting the loss in some way. A good partnership is one in which both parties benefit.

4. Business deals are a basis for developing relationships that support each partner's interests. Contracts are mainly a statement of intent, and since they can't predict all eventualities, it's best to word them generally. Risk is managed through mutual accommodation. If changes cause one partner to suffer excessively after a contract is signed, the other partner should offset the loss in some way. A good partnership is one in which both parties benefit, and give and take is vital in relationships.

#### Interpretation

1. Indicates a strong Universalist bias.
2. Indicates a Universalist tendency with a nod to flexibility.
3. Indicates a Particularist emphasis on relationships
4. Indicates a strong Particularist bias.

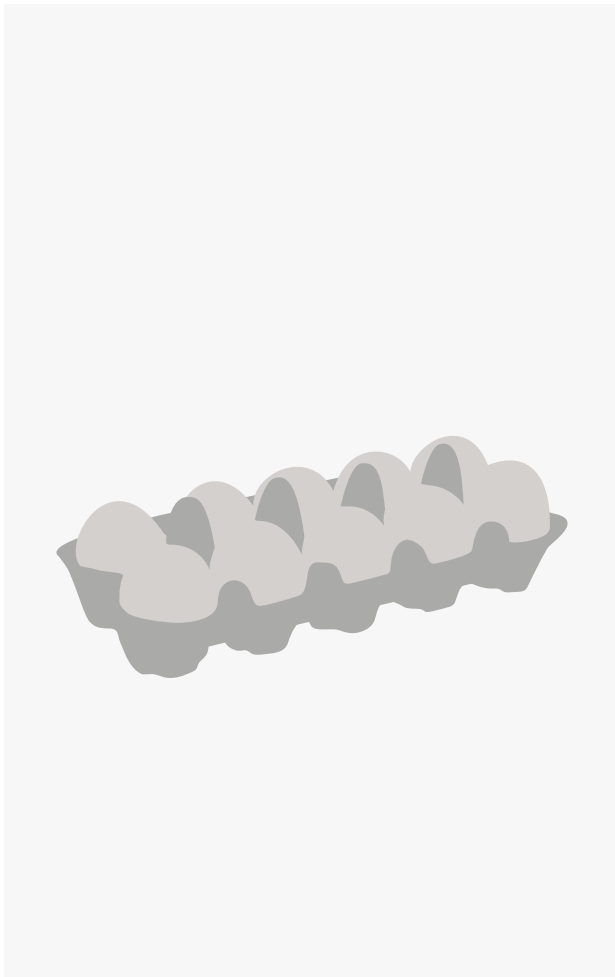


The Universalism/Particularism continuum characterizes attitudes towards rules and authority.

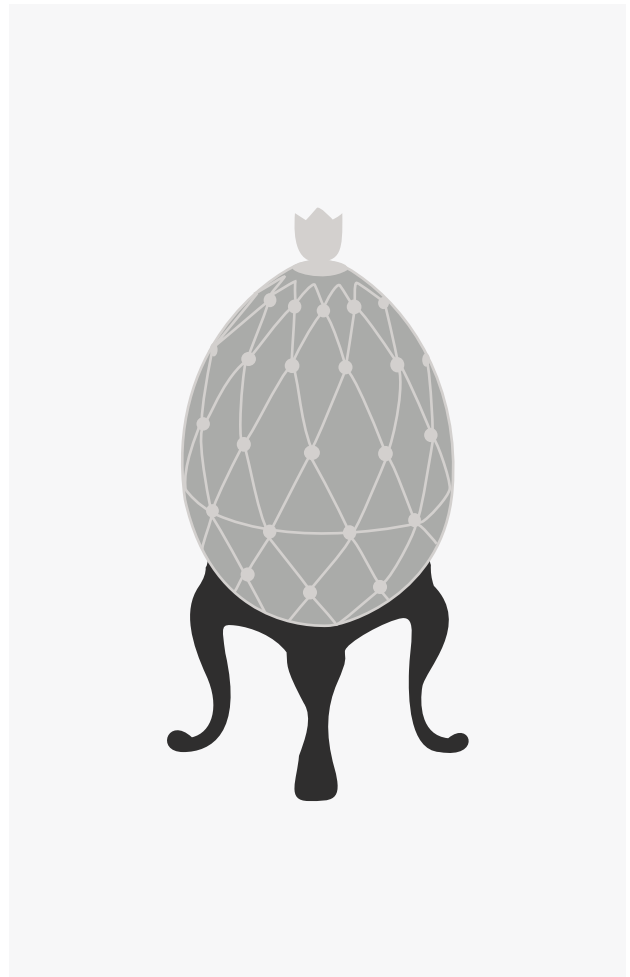
Universalists feel that all people should obey the rules all the time for the benefit of society; breaking a rule sets a dangerous precedent. An example is Germany, where there is a fine for bumping another car while parking, even if the other car is not marked.

Particularists believe in following rules selectively, based on the situation, sometimes making exceptions ("I'm in a hurry", "this is a silly rule", "this is an emergency", etc.). An example is Russia, where it can be difficult to enforce quality control processes due employees' disdain for rules, even those that ensure a better product.

Universalism



Particularism



### Perspectives, Motivations and Goals

Goal: proceed efficiently by developing and enforcing contracts that protect business deals.	Goal: proceed safely by developing trusting relationships to ensure that partners behave honorably.
Prefer specific terms in contracts to cover all possible contingencies.	Prefer vague contract wording to allow for the unexpected.
Expect contracts to be followed regardless of business environment.	Expect partners to be responsive to fluctuations in business environment, possibly modifying contracts.
Expect business to proceed quickly and according to set guidelines.	Expect business to take a long time and involve changes and surprises.
Assume that others will follow rules.	Suspect that others will break rules.
Base business dealings on perceived opportunity.	Base business dealings on the existence of strong supporting relationships.
Tend to feel that there is only one truth or reality.	Tend to feel that there are multiple perspectives on reality.
Trust people who honor their word or contract.	Trust people who help them as needed.
Feel insecure in the absence of rules, policies and regulatory structure.	Feel constrained by rules, policies and regulatory structure.
Base loyalty to their company on its principles and reputation.	Base loyalty to their company on personal relationships within the company.

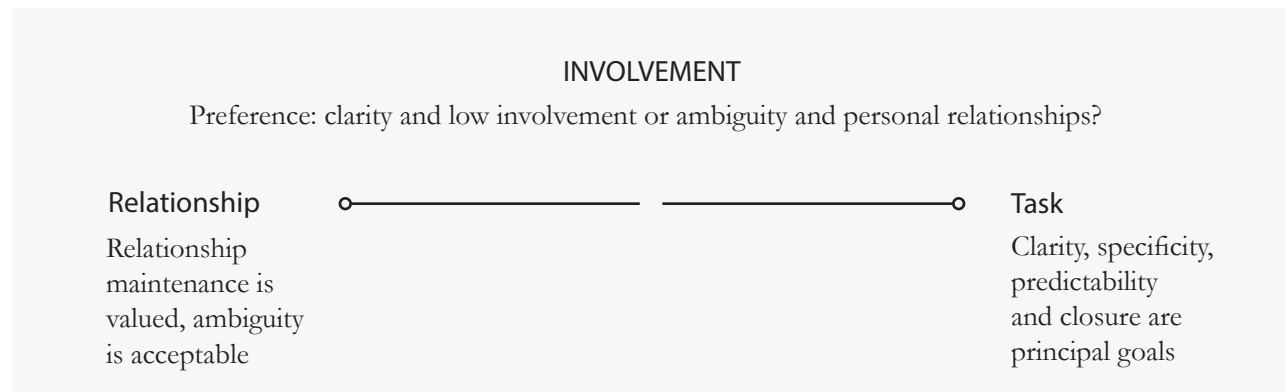
### Behavior and Communication

Begin and end meetings according to schedule.	May arrive late. Meetings end when business is concluded.
Are careful to apply rules equally to everyone.	Give friends and family preferential treatment.
Become suspicious that their time is being wasted in drawn-out business dealings.	Become suspicious that the other party is hiding something when business is rushed.
Strive for consistency and uniform procedures.	Build informal networks and create private deals.

### Structures and Processes

Centralized procedures throughout company.	Branch offices have greater autonomy.
Company representatives behave according to rules and procedures.	Company representatives have relatively great freedom to improvise.
Relatively high degree of bureaucracy; rules are followed and enforced.	Relatively low degree of bureaucracy or disregard for rules.
Job descriptions are specific and detailed.	Job descriptions are general to allow for flexibility.
Employees complete work according to specific criteria.	Employees contribute wherever needed.
Promotion is based on performance.	Promotion is based on fit with the team and ranking by the supervisor.

## RELATIONSHIP AND TASK: ATTITUDES TOWARDS ACCOMPLISHING GOALS



### Self-Assessment: What's Your Bias?

Consider this scenario: A team is preparing for a visit from a potential partner. Which approach most closely matches your own?

1. On a first visit, the most important thing is to get to know this potential partner. To be sure they'll be an honorable partner, we need to understand what kind of people we're dealing with and their philosophy of doing business. We'll prepare a lot of social activities so we can get to know one another. If things feel right, we may talk business towards the end. We won't ask a lot of explicit questions; we'll allow things to unfold gradually.
2. On a first visit, it's important thing to get to know this potential partner. We want to be sure they're reputable businesspeople and that their philosophy of doing business is a good fit with ours. We'll focus on social activities in the beginning and move on to business discussions towards the end of the visit. We'll ask general questions at first, then move on to explicit business issues.
3. On this first visit, we want to confirm that this potential partner is as reputable as they seem. Social preliminaries are mainly a courtesy; business issues are the most important item of discussion. To save everyone's time, we'll get on with business as quickly as possible. We'll want to get solid answers to business questions in these meetings.
4. On this first visit, we'll be looking for a strong business proposition. Our potential partner's reputation seems good, and we'll have a contract to protect us. If our initial project goes well, we'll do another one. If things don't work out, there are other partners out there. The visit will focus on business. There's no need to waste time on social preliminaries.

### Interpretation

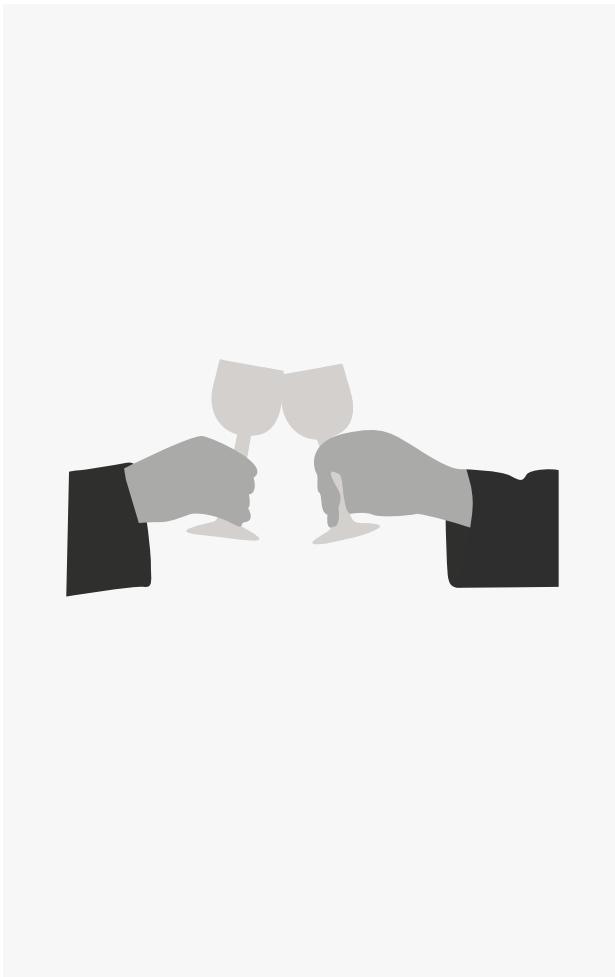
1. Indicates a strong Relationship bias.
2. A Relationship bias with acknowledgment of Task considerations.
3. A Task bias with acknowledgment of Relationship considerations.
4. Reflects a Task bias.

The Relationship/Task continuum describes the amount of weight given to logical arguments compared to interpersonal relationships.

In Relationship cultures, people interact and make decisions based on personal relationships. They interact minimally with people they don't know and establish business partnerships based on a history of trust, which takes time to develop. An example is mainland China, where business dealings are preceded by a lengthy getting-to-know-you period and social interaction.

In Task cultures, people interact and make decisions based on the logic of opportunity and shared goals. They interact freely with people they don't know, and establish business partnerships quickly, based on business opportunity and carefully worded agreements. An example is Germany, where business advances quickly on the basis of contracts. Below is a brief characterization of each system.

Relationship

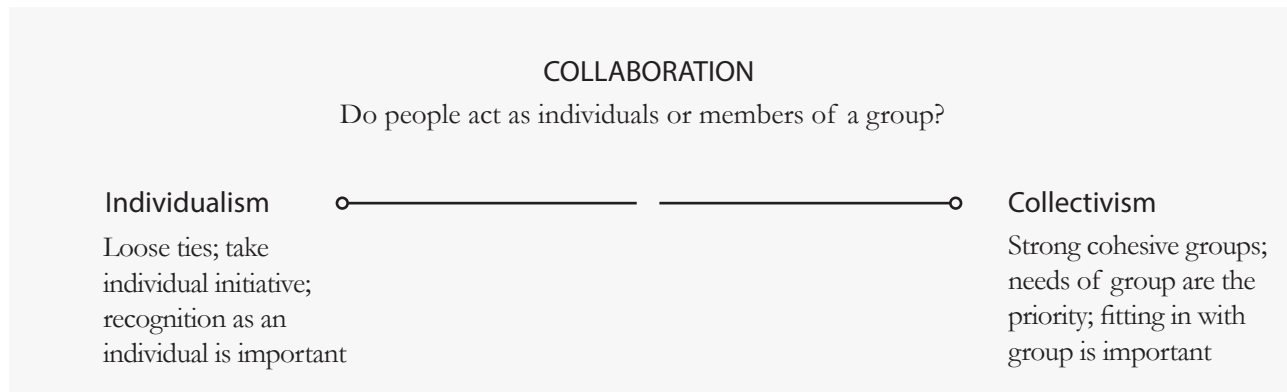


Task



RELATIONSHIP	TASK
<b>Perspectives, Motivations and Goals</b>	
Prefer to build relationships first, then consider doing business.	Go straight to business discussions; personal feelings don't matter much.
Expect social interaction with business partners (dinner invitations, questions about personal life, etc.).	Consider private and work environments separate.
Convey reliability by demonstrating social standing, wealth, refinement of representatives.	Convey reliability by demonstrating strong company performance and capability.
Employees have personal relationship with one another and participate in company community.	Employees have casual relationships with one another and a contractual relationship with company.
Tend to emphasize the history of the company and its function as a social group.	Tend to emphasize objectives, numbers, financial data.
Legal structures not considered important to ensuring job security; relationships/ seniority guarantee continued employment.	Legal structures considered important in ensuring job security; relationships/ seniority do not guarantee continued employment.
Regard hierarchy as fixed – relative status of coworkers does not vary outside work.	Regard hierarchy as situational – relative status of coworkers outside work depends more on the context.
<b>Behavior and Communication</b>	
Begin meetings with social preliminaries, get down to business afterwards.	Begin meetings with business discussions, socialize afterwards if time permits.
Structure meetings loosely; perceive that there are many different ways to reach objectives.	Structure meetings tightly; try to move in a straight path towards objectives.
Ramble in presentations; digress from agenda to accommodate questions and interests of all concerned.	Present in linear fashion; stick to agenda to accomplish business efficiently.
Expect to spend time on connected topics; all are related.	Expect to address principal topics specifically and individually.
Give complex responses explaining history and nuances before conclusion.	Give cut-and-dried answers followed by limited explanation of nuances.
<b>Structures and Processes</b>	
Professional relationships maintained outside work through social interaction.	Professional relationships acknowledged primarily at work; social relationships may not include coworkers.
Seniors may presume on juniors to perform support duties outside of work.	Juniors have no responsibility to seniors outside work environment.
Establish little bureaucracy; few rigid rules.	Establish administrative structures and systems with rules and controls.
Financial incentives based on strength of relationships and personal situation.	Financial incentives based on performance.
Companies address employee needs by providing housing, compensation for personal hardship, etc.	Companies support all employees equally, primarily through salary and related financial benefits.

# INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM: ATTITUDES TOWARDS COLLABORATION AND REWARD



## Self-Assessment: What's Your Bias?

1. I'm on a great team with a very effective group process. During our initial meeting, we divide tasks up according to our expertise, and separate to do our work, which Working separately helps us concentrate and make use of our special talents. After we've all done our parts, we meet to fit them together. We really respect each other's work, but we aren't that close personally. We have our own friends, and mostly just see each other at work.

When our group collaborates with other teams, we try to integrate thoroughly with them to form one large group. It's more efficient that way, because it helps us stay in touch about problems that come up in either group so there are no surprises.

2. I'm on a great team with a very effective group process. During our initial meeting, we divide up tasks according to our expertise. We work on those tasks together, because it's helpful to develop each of our tasks with others' input, and our work stays integrated that way. We've become good friends, and spend time with each other away from the office.

When our group collaborates with other teams, we're careful to maintain a professional demeanor when we interact with them so they'll know they can trust us. We solve internal problems on our own, and don't worry our partners with them unless something happens that we can't handle internally.

### Interpretation

1. Indicates an Individualist approach to working separately, maintaining loose internal relationships and integrating groups with one another.
2. Indicates a Collectivist approach to close group work and internal relationships and protecting group boundaries.

## Self-Assessment 2

A team of design engineers worked hard on a project and produced an excellent new product in record time. The technical skills and ideas of one team member in particular moved the project forward. The product won an award for customer satisfaction.

At the annual meeting, the company president is planning to give the team an award for their excellent work and the success of this product. Should the president simply mention the team as a whole or should there also be praise for the team member whose abilities were especially helpful? Which response seems best to you?

1. Yes, the individual should get special mention at the annual meeting. Acknowledging star performers will encourage others to do their best.
2. Yes, the individual should get special mention at the annual meeting. The team should be proud to have such a strong member.
3. No, the individual should not be mentioned in public, but should be financially compensated according to his/her performance.
4. No, the individual should not be mentioned or financially compensated differently from other group members—the work was a team effort, and recognizing one person in particular would be unfair to the others.

### Interpretation

1. Indicates an Individualist approach to work and recognition.
2. Contextualizes the individual result in the Collectivist environment.
3. Emphasizes the importance of the group as a public entity.
4. Subordinates individual reward to that of the group.

The Individualism/Collectivism continuum describes attitudes towards who takes responsibility for work and decisions and who is rewarded for their outcomes.

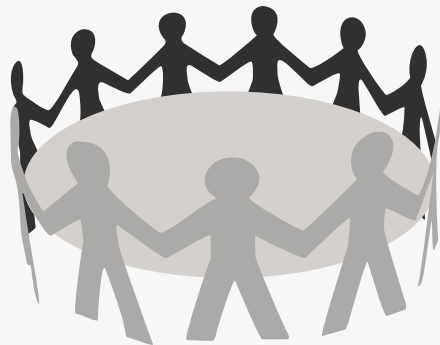
In Individualist cultures, work is divided into tasks which are assumed by individuals, who receive credit or blame for their outcome. Individuals have decision-making authority. An example is the U.S., where individuals are acknowledged and rewarded for individual performance.

In Collectivist cultures, a project is undertaken by a group, which receives credit or blame for its outcome as a team. Decisions are made by groups, whose members must agree before moving forward. An example is Japan, where people with equal seniority are promoted together without regard for individual performance. Below is a brief characterization of each system.

### Individualism



### Collectivism





## INDIVIDUALISM

## COLLECTIVISM

## Perspectives, Motivations and Goals

Focus is on individual action, personality and achievement.

Focus is on group membership, group identity and group performance.

Performance of teams and companies is more important than internal harmony and consistency.

The appearance of harmony and consistency is vital to the prestige of teams and companies regardless of performance.

Turnover on teams is considered acceptable; replacements with equivalent skills can be found.

Turnover on teams is perceived as a sign of low morale and poor management; loyalty and experience are difficult to replace.

## Behavior and Communication

Persuaders try to identify and influence opinion leaders and decision-makers.

Persuaders try to present case in all aspects so that all specialists present will be satisfied.

Team boundaries are softened to allow groups to merge for joint projects.

Boundaries and formality between partnering teams are maintained.

Problems are mentioned early to partners for joint solutions.

Problems may be withheld from partners as long as possible to preserve team image.

People are less likely to conform with norms and policies (nonconformity=uniqueness, creativity).

People are more likely to conform with norms and policies (nonconformity=deviance, unreliability).

Team members tend to work individually and bring work together to integrate.

Team members tend to work together throughout a project.

People speak as individuals, giving personal opinions.

People speak as representatives of the group or company, refraining from personal opinions. One person may be appointed to speak for the group.

People may speculate and hypothesize when in doubt.

People are likely to delay answering and seek confirmation when in doubt.

People may enjoy being alone, and may find constant interaction exhausting.

People prefer to spend their time with others and may find solitude disturbing.

People tend to change companies and occupations in the course of their careers.

People are less likely to change companies and occupations during their careers.

Innovators are likely to venture out on their own.

Innovators are likely to involve others.

Innovations tend to be made outside existing networks, and are likely to be patented.

Innovations tend to be made within existing networks and are less likely to be patented.

## Structures and Processes

Individuals' contributions to teamwork are apparent and team members' strengths and weaknesses are clear.

Individuals' contributions to teamwork are not divulged and any weaknesses are covered by group.

Individual targets are established and each member is responsible for meeting theirs.

Group targets are established and the group is responsible for meeting them.

Responsibility for negotiations may be held by an individual who requests input from others at will.

Negotiating responsibility shared by people with expertise in relevant functional areas.

Decisions may be made by an individual without consulting others, and implementation may be delayed while internal support for them is developed.

Decision-making is consensual, and involves checking frequently with others. Once made, decisions have internal support and are quickly implemented.

Individuals are recognized and rewarded.

Groups are recognized and rewarded.

Performance-based pay is the norm.

Service/seniority-based pay is the norm.

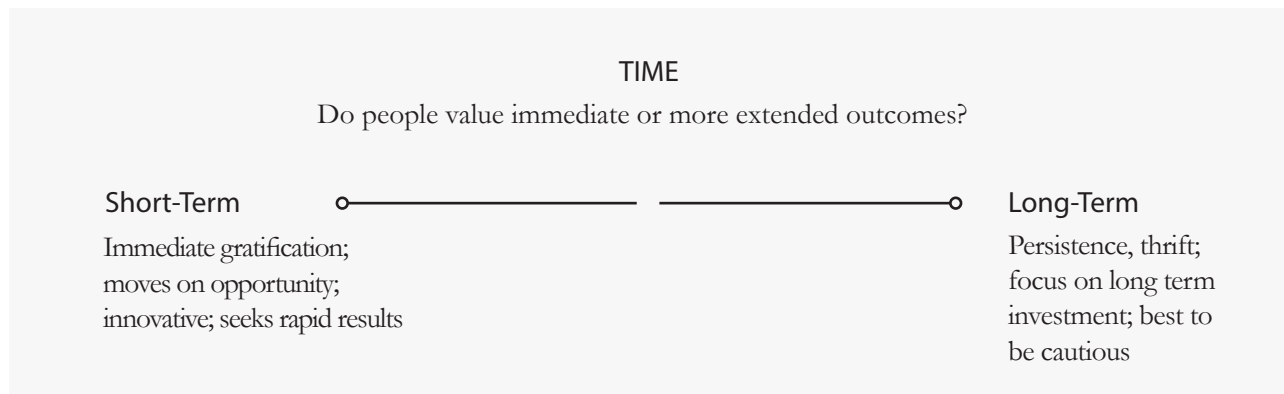
Individual pay review determines salaries.

Collective bargaining determines salaries.

Compensation is based on individual targets.

Tend to avoid individual bonuses and commissions.

## SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM ORIENTATION: ATTITUDES TOWARDS TIME



### Self-Assessment: What's Your Bias?

Consider the following scenario: Several managers at a medical device company are discussing an inquiry from a potential partner. An overseas distributor sees an opportunity to introduce their product into a new, high-growth market, but they must move quickly, before a competitor's product is released. If the initiative fails, they could be perceived as hasty and unprepared. Which of the managers' various perspectives most closely matches your own preference?

1. We should act quickly. The most important thing is to take advantage of the current opportunity. If it doesn't work out, we can always change direction.
2. We should act quickly. The most important thing is to take advantage of the current opportunity, but we should be cautious. Changing direction later due to a mistake could damage our reputation.
3. Our reputation is more important than current opportunity. We should move only when we've had time to become reasonably sure this project will work.
4. Our reputation is more important than current opportunity. We should not move on this project until we're sure it is in line with our tradition and reputation and will not embarrass us.

#### Interpretation

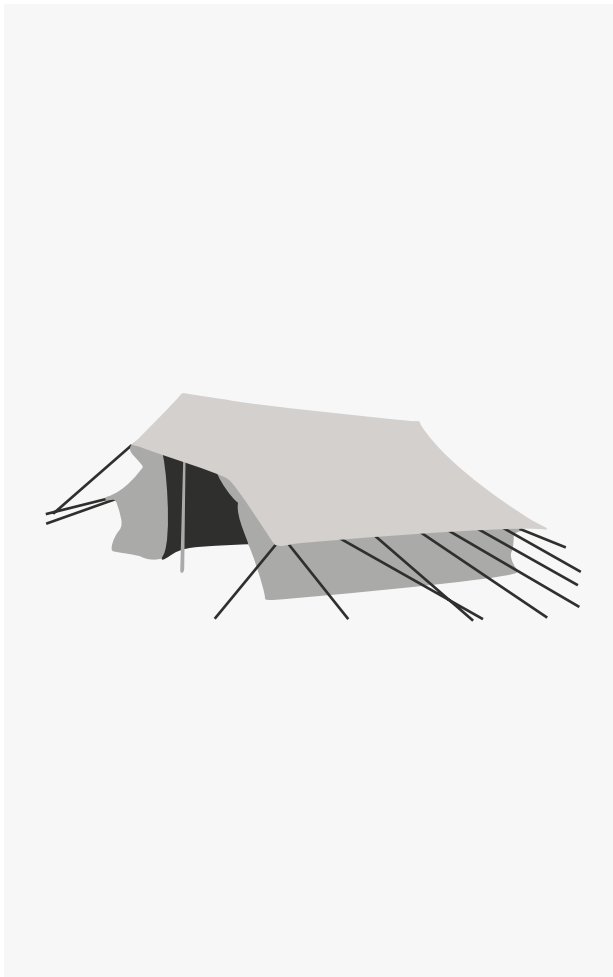
1. Suggests a Short-Term orientation.
2. Indicates a Short-Term orientation with recognition of Long-Term considerations.
3. Indicates a Long-Term orientation with recognition of Short-Term considerations.
4. Suggests a Long-Term orientation.

The Short-Term vs. Long-Term continuum describes attitudes towards time and its implications for the development of strategy and creation of relationships.

In Short-Term cultures, the present and future are the focus. Strategy focuses on the near term, and relationships are developed quickly to take advantage of mutual opportunity. An example is India, where changes in direction are made quickly and concern about the connection between current activity and the past is minimal.

In Long-Term cultures, past history and tradition are the focus. Strategy focuses on the preservation or recreation of past success, and relationships are developed slowly to ensure success over time. An example is China, where change in direction is made cautiously, using existing relationships where possible, and new corporate relationships are developed slowly. Below is a brief characterization of each system.

Short-Term



Long-Term



## SHORT-TERM

## LONG-TERM

### Perspectives, Motivations and Goals

Now and the immediate future are the focus. The past is seen as largely irrelevant.	Tradition and history inform any decision about the future.
Authority stems from recent accomplishments.	Continuity with the past is considered vital to new initiatives.
Short term results and the bottom line are emphasized.	Authority stems from history of accomplishments, even if none are recent.
Relationships can be created as needed relative to these.	Strong relationships are the basis for future results. Nothing can be achieved overnight.
A primary goal is to create new value and achieve new success.	A primary goal is to recreate or continue past success.
Deadlines and milestones are a primary focus.	There is a perception that things happen in due time.
Ability, expertise and performance are highly valued.	Age, experience and wisdom are highly valued.
Tend to view customers as instrumental to success of the current initiative.	Tend to view customers as relationships to be maintained.
A bad strategy is not considered a disaster as long as a productive change in direction can be made.	A bad strategy is considered very serious and likely to result in a loss of credibility.
Time efficiency is highly valued; continued study is viewed as having a point of diminishing returns.	Thorough study and exhaustive analysis are highly valued and can continue for an extended period of time.

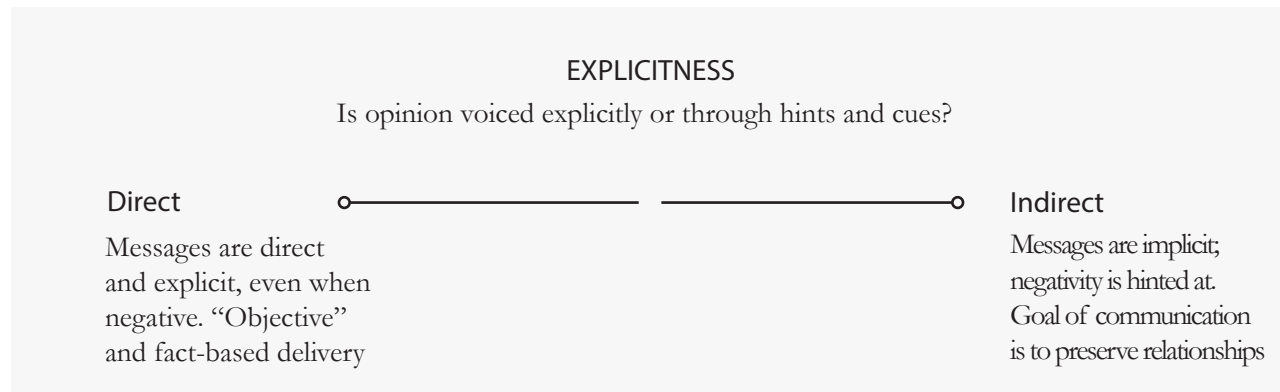
### Behavior and Communication

Constantly analyze recent performance to modify direction quickly.	Tendency to stay on course through ups and downs and let results play out.
Assume risk to take advantage of a window of opportunity.	Forgo opportunity to avoid incurring risk.
Planning tends to be complex and complete, and is reworked when conditions change.	Planning tends to focus on goals, with details left vague to accommodate changes in conditions.
Presentations are oriented to present and future.	Presentations are oriented to past history and reputation.
Persuasive arguments focus on facts, statistics and the value of opportunity.	Persuasive arguments focus on history, tradition and the value of continuity.
Customers reward innovation and new features.	Customers reward reputation, consistency and service.
Tend to look for quick closure to business dealings.	Expect lengthy meetings in order to create partnerships.

### Structures and Processes

Negotiators may be reassigned without disruption to proceedings.	The relationship with a negotiator is crucial; replacements are disruptive.
Relationships are based on current needs. When old relationships lose importance, new ones are made.	Relationships are carefully maintained. Resentment results when they are allowed to lapse; enemies are forever.
An employee's success derives from individual performance.	An employee's success derives from the relationships with his/her manager.
Employees are promoted and rewarded based on recent accomplishments	Employees are promoted and rewarded based on growth and relationships over time.
Bonuses and raises follow performance closely to reward incremental success.	Bonuses and raises lag behind recent performance to reward long-term strategy.
Rules and processes are designed to encourage efficiency and achieve goals.	Rules and processes are designed to encourage consistency and continuity with the past.

## INDIRECTNESS AND DIRECTNESS: EXPLICITNESS IN COMMUNICATION



### Self-Assessment: What’s Your Bias?

Two teams were preparing for a big presentation. Which approach seems most appropriate to you?

1. We will prepare a concise presentation. We’ll take questions at the end and answer them as directly as possible. We have a new idea that we will present for feedback in the meeting. If there’s any disapproval of the idea, we’ll get it out in the open and work through it.
2. We will prepare a clear presentation. We’ll take questions at the end and take time to answer them to the audience’s satisfaction. We have a new idea that we will present for feedback in the meeting. If there’s any disapproval of the idea, we’ll record it and work on the idea after the meeting.
3. We will prepare a general presentation. We’ll take questions as they come up and take time to answer them to the audience’s satisfaction. We have a new idea that we will mention casually in the meeting. If there’s any disapproval of the idea, we’ll ask a key player for advice after the meeting.
4. We will prepare a general presentation, laying out the basic items to be considered. We will provide background information to give the full context of the issues to be discussed. We’ll take any questions as they come up and see where they lead us. We have a new idea, which we have discussed with three key participants. We’ve asked one of them to mention it in the meeting and we’ll see where it goes.

#### Interpretation

1. Indicates a Direct approach.
2. Indicates a Direct approach with allowances for Indirect issues.
3. Is an Indirect approach with some Direct provisions.
4. Is a purely Indirect approach.

The Indirectness/Directness continuum describes the way communication is delivered with respect to maintaining relationships and managing conflict.

In Indirect cultures, the goal of communication is the preservation of relationships. The delivery of information is organized to provide contextual information without stating a position that could cause offense, and disagreement is resolved privately or through intermediaries. An example is Thailand, where disagreement is voiced so indirectly that visitors from outside may never realize they caused offense and were disliked.

In Direct cultures, the goal of communication is the transfer of facts and information. The delivery of information is organized logically and disagreement is voiced openly and resolved through debate. An example is the Netherlands, where blunt disagreement and detailed questioning are the preferred method of communication and do not cause personal offense. Below is a brief characterization of each system.

Indirect



Direct



## INDIRECT

## DIRECT

## Perspectives, Motivations and Goals

Value developing relationships in business dealings.	Value "getting to the point" in business dealings.
Value harmony and politeness; details can be worked out if a relationship is maintained successfully.	Value direct exchange of information and content; relationships are expected to withstand disagreement.
Consider negotiating issues in terms of people and personalities. Don't do business with people they dislike.	Separate people and personalities from negotiating issues. Don't need to like business partners.
See negotiating as a ritual with a strong social component that develops relationships.	See negotiation as a practical way to make decisions and establish procedures.
Perceive direct speech as confrontational and lacking in sophistication.	Perceive indirect speech as indicating a lack of honesty or reliability.
Consider face-saving for all participants a cooperative goal.	Consider clarifying issues and reaching decisions a cooperative goal.
Form is valued over function; concessions may be made in the name of harmony.	Function is valued over form; harmony may be sacrificed to reach a good decision.

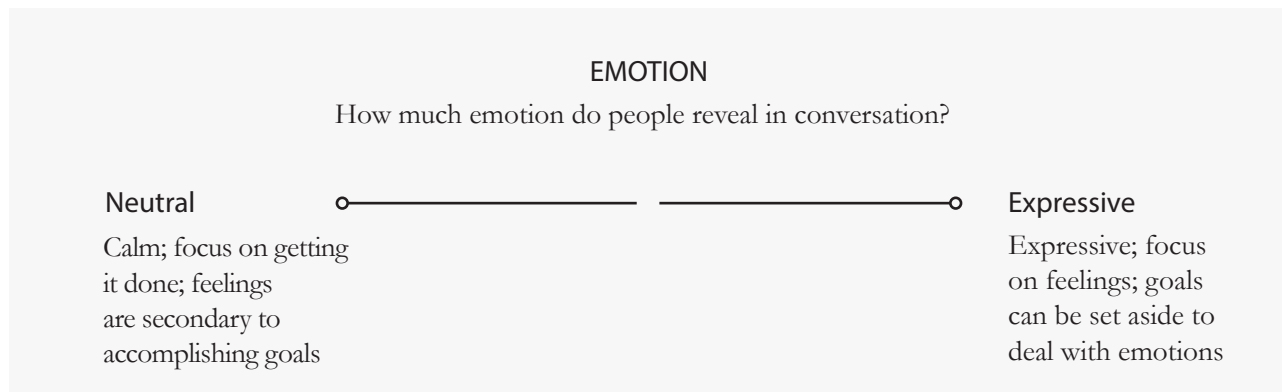
## Behavior and Communication

Tend to speak cautiously, with a goal of avoiding face loss of anyone present. Rarely offer negative input.	Tend to speak clearly, with a goal of conveying information. Voice opinions readily.
Tend to interpret messages based on contextual cues. Expect hidden meaning in input they receive.	Tend to take input at face value. Don't expect subtexts or send covert signals in conversation.
Transmit negative messages through subtle signals (body language, tone of voice) rather than voicing opinions that could embarrass others.	Tend not to take disagreement personally. Offer negative input directly, and assume others will do the same.
Presentations are non-linear, and may involve tangents and digressions.	Presentations are clear and proceed through material in a linear manner.
Presenters provide general, philosophical and historical information. Listeners avoid asking direct questions that might embarrass others.	Presenters are explicit about each point. Listeners ask detailed questions and receive specific answers.
Consider "yes/no" questions confrontational and too direct, and prefer to sound people out indirectly.	Tend to ask direct questions and expect to be asked direct questions in return.
Expect to spend time on social preliminaries and get to know colleagues before discussing business with a new partner.	Expect to begin talking business with a new partner right away and get to know colleagues in the course of a project.
Expect things to take time and arrive prepared to give it.	Arrive prepared to talk about precise details, and expect meetings to proceed rapidly.
Seek general information from personal network when investigating.	Seek specific information from research, publications, etc. when investigating.

## Structures and Processes

Intermediaries may be used to resolve disagreements to avoid confrontation.	Disagreements are dealt with directly.
Decisions are often made before meetings by networking with participants; meetings provide official ratification.	Decisions tend to be made during meetings through discussion and debate.
Specific mechanisms such as institutionalized drinking may provide opportunities to speak freely.	Direct exchange may occur in any context.

## NEUTRAL AND EXPRESSIVE: ATTITUDES TOWARDS EXPRESSING EMOTION



### Self-Assessment: What's Your Bias?

Which of the examples below is closest to your attitude towards behavior in the workplace?

1. I'm a quiet person, and when I'm at work, I keep my feelings to myself. If I'm worried about something personal or have something to celebrate, I don't mention it, because that would be unprofessional. By the same token, when I have a strong reaction to something a colleague says or does, I don't mention my emotional reaction—I wouldn't want to be seen as weak or childish.
2. I'm a relatively quiet person, and when I'm at work, I keep my feelings to myself in public. If I'm worried about something personal or have something to celebrate, I seek out a friend to share it with in private. When I have a strong reaction to something a colleague says or does, I don't mention my emotional reaction right then—I let them know later so we can work things out.
3. I'm a fairly demonstrative person, and when I'm at work, I tend to let people know what's going on with me. If I'm worried about something personal or have something to celebrate, I seek out friends to share it with. When I have a strong reaction to something a colleague says or does, I let them know how I feel, because it's no good allowing bad feelings to build.
4. I'm a very demonstrative person, and when I'm at work, I always let people know what's going on with me. If I'm worried about something personal or have something to celebrate, I talk about it with the people around me. Discussing things is a natural way of building rapport at work. When I have a strong reaction to something a colleague says or does, I tell them clearly what they've done so they won't make the mistake again.

#### Interpretation

1. Indicates a Neutral bias.
2. Indicates a primarily Neutral approach, with some Expressiveness.
3. Shows a primarily Expressive approach.
4. Indicates a strong Expressive tendency.



The Neutral/Expressive continuum describes the degree of emotion conveyed in interaction.

In Neutral cultures, feelings and emotions are not made obvious in interaction. Gestures and facial expressions are minimal and tone of voice is kept neutral. Problems are discussed with close friends, and are not communicated in business situations. An example is Japan, where physical contact between close friends or romantic couples is minimal, and “bringing problems to work” is considered unprofessional.

In Expressive cultures, feelings and emotions are made obvious in interaction. Gestures and facial expressions are active and tone of voice varies with the speaker’s attitude towards a topic. Problems are discussed publicly, and may be communicated in business situations. An example is Egypt, where businesspeople shake hands in greeting and friends kiss on the cheek. People discuss problems openly at work, sometimes becoming emotional and allowing them to interfere with the execution of duties. Below is a brief characterization of each system.

Neutral



Expressive



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**NEUTRAL****EXPRESSIVE**

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**Perspectives, Motivations and Goals**

Perceive emotional display as unprofessional and an indication of a lack of self-control.	Perceive controlled emotion as indicating a lack of commitment or engagement.
Value job security, financial incentives, interesting work.	Value interpersonal relations and positive working conditions.
Goal of interaction is to interact without disturbing others or giving others advantage by showing one's feelings.	Goal is to connect with others, meet others' emotional needs and get one's own needs met.
Emphasize equity, mutual competition, and performance.	Emphasize equality, solidarity, and quality of work life.

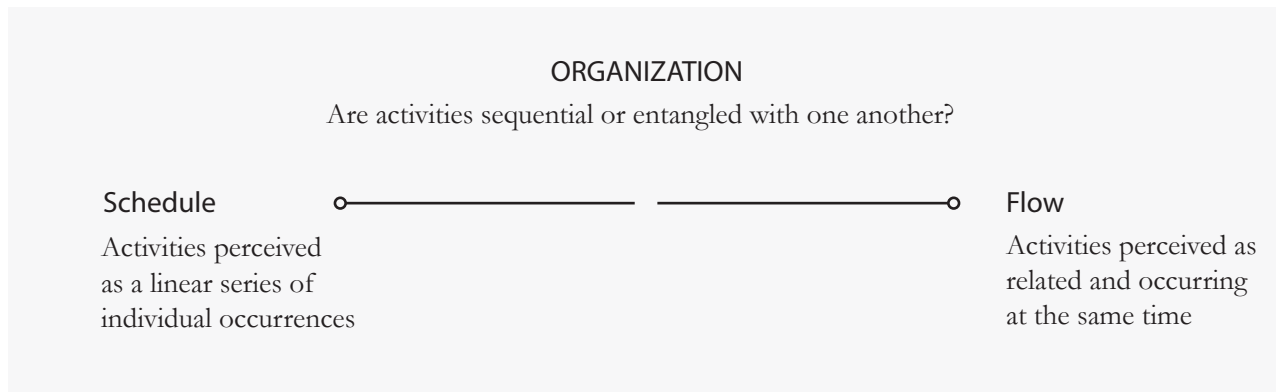
**Behavior and Communication**

Avoid physical contact and strong body language.	Engage in physical contact and use strong body language.
Tone of voice and body language are moderate during disagreement.	Environment can become heated when disagreement surfaces.
Tend to listen without interrupting; may perceive interruption as offensive.	Enjoy brainstorming, speak enthusiastically, overlapping others.
Use open questions, control body language.	Ask direct questions, show enthusiasm.
Tend to avoid direct confrontation.	Can be confrontational and challenging.
Tend to provide little feedback.	Tend to provide overt feedback.
Tend not to express what they are thinking or feeling; stick to facts or logic.	Speak freely about ideas, opinions and feelings.
Tend to prepare thoroughly and stick to agenda.	Show empathy and understanding of other's position, changing course as needed.

**Structures and Processes**

Reward and promotion tied to performance.	Reward and promotion tied to interpersonal effectiveness.
Managers expected to be decisive, assertive, aggressive, competitive.	Managers expected to be intuitive, deal with feelings, seek consensus.

## SCHEDULE AND FLOW: APPROACHES TO TIME MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING



### Self-Assessment: What's Your Bias?

Three teams from the same company will be working together on a project. In a planning discussion, they have different approaches to organizing the project. Which is most similar to the one you would adopt?

1. We should create a project plan that will articulate its goals and the steps leading to each goal, with dates specified for milestones. We should have weekly meetings in which each team will report its progress and we will modify the plan in light of each update. In this way, we will meet the deadline.
2. We should create a project plan that will articulate its goal and the steps leading to each one, with approximate dates for each milestone. We should have periodic meetings in which each team will report its progress and we will modify the plan in light of each update. In this way, we will meet the deadline.
3. We should create a project plan that will articulate each goal, and the paths towards each goal. There's no point in specifying dates for milestones because problems will come up that alter our timeline, but we will always have the deadline firmly in mind.
4. We should create a project plan that will articulate each goal, and the paths towards each goal. There's no point in specifying dates for particular milestones because we will probably change directions several times, but we will know what the milestones are, and will always have the deadline firmly in mind. The plan will take shape as we get further along.

#### Interpretation

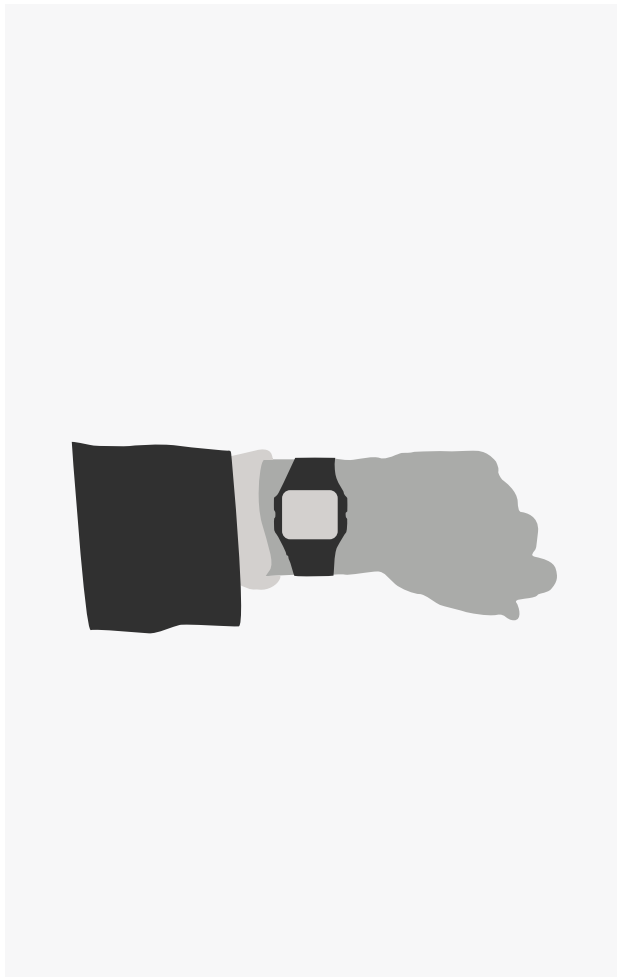
1. A schedule-oriented approach.
2. Indicates a Schedule orientation with provisions for flow-oriented factors.
3. Indicates a flow-oriented approach with some concessions to Schedule factors.
4. Indicates a flow-oriented approach.

The Schedule/Flow continuum describes people's approach to time with respect to organization and planning.

In Schedule cultures, time is perceived as linear, with events occurring one after the other. Meetings begin and end on time. Tasks are organized sequentially, and there is a commitment to sticking to plans. An example is Switzerland, where meetings are scheduled and executed on time, and plans are carefully developed and implemented.

In Flow cultures, time is perceived as a complex system, with events occurring simultaneously. Meetings may begin and end late, with people checking computers and taking phone calls throughout. Plans are subordinate to relationship maintenance and subject to frequent change. An example is Italy, where meetings may be delayed, and plans are subject to frequent modification as changes occur. Below is a brief characterization of each system.

Schedule



Flow



SCHEDULE	FLOW
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**Perspectives, Motivations and Goals**

Time is viewed as a sequential process, with events occurring one after another.	Time is viewed as flexible and chaotic, with events occurring simultaneously.
Time has substance – it can be measured, saved, wasted.	Time is intangible – a characteristic of the activity.
Time is perceived as a feature of the clock and calendar.	Time is perceived as a feature of opportunity and obligation.
Schedules are viewed as serious commitments.	Schedules are viewed as goals to be met if appropriate and convenient.
Commitment made to appointments is viewed as a high priority.	Commitment to the activity/conversation is viewed as a high priority.
Schedule changes by others are viewed as indications of lack of commitment.	Schedule changes by others are viewed as natural and reasonable.
Changes to plans are viewed as disruptive; the later the change, the more disruptive.	Changes to plans are viewed as inevitable; late changes are accommodated.
Getting everything done is a priority.	Giving everything adequate time is a priority.
Interruptions are viewed as disruptive and impolite.	Interruptions are considered unavoidable.
People prefer a quiet working environment for focusing on individual tasks.	People prefer a dynamic working environment for multitasking.

**Behavior and Communication**

Appointments are moved or canceled reluctantly, due to serious impediment.	Appointments are freely moved or canceled according to opportunity and convenience.
Commitments are made sequentially: “we will do this, then that”.	Commitments are made together: “These things need to happen”.
Estimated time for each task is considered when making commitments. There are 24 hours in a day.	A day’s commitments are perceived as taking as much time as they take, perhaps more than 24 hours.
People tend to focus on one task, then move on.	People tend to work on multiple tasks at a time.
People divide tasks into equal parts and move forward incrementally to complete projects.	People may use deadline pressure to spark creativity and work harder towards the end to complete projects.
Interpersonal interaction is constrained in order to prioritize schedules.	Appointments are missed in order to prioritize interpersonal interaction.
Planning tends to be complex and complete, and is reworked when conditions change.	Planning tends to focus on goals, with details left vague to accommodate changes in conditions.
Phone calls or e-mail are considered most efficient.	Face-to-face interaction is considered most effective.

**Structures and Processes**

Work environments are orderly and methodical.	Work environments are dynamic and may seem chaotic.
Process and procedures are specific and observed by employees.	Processes and procedures are general and may be disregarded.
Project management plans are detailed and internal milestones are specific.	Project management plans are general and internal milestones may not be specified.

## SELF ASSESSMENT CHART

Read the self-assessment question(s) for each of the cultural features in the Cultural Behaviors and Attitudes section and mark on the charts below where you fall on each continuum. Knowing your own cultural profile will help you identify areas where you may experience challenges when coping with a new environment. Generally speaking, the further you are towards the end of a continuum, the more difficulty you will experience when dealing with an environment where the opposite end is the norm.

	STATUS		
Achievement	<input type="radio"/> _____ <input type="radio"/>		Birthright
	AUTHORITY		
Universalist	<input type="radio"/> _____ <input type="radio"/>		Particularist
	INVOLVEMENT		
Relationship	<input type="radio"/> _____ <input type="radio"/>		Task
	COLLABORATION		
Individualist	<input type="radio"/> _____ <input type="radio"/>		Collectivist
	TIME		
Short-Term	<input type="radio"/> _____ <input type="radio"/>		Long-Term
	DIRECTNESS		
Indirect	<input type="radio"/> _____ <input type="radio"/>		Direct
	EMOTION		
Neutral	<input type="radio"/> _____ <input type="radio"/>		Expressive
	ORGANIZATION		
Schedule	<input type="radio"/> _____ <input type="radio"/>		Flow



REACTIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS





## ACHIEVEMENT AND BIRTHRIGHT: ATTITUDES TOWARDS STATUS

### Achievement about Birthright

We chose an expert on the relevant technology to represent us. They sent someone who's been buried in management for the last 15 years and knows nothing about the technology. Why didn't they send someone competent?

That big company hasn't had a great quarter in two years, but they're still very stand-offish. They don't seem to understand the need to move quickly and decisively to capture market share.

We tried to establish a friendly, relaxed tone in our first meeting, but they were stiff and formal. They don't seem to respect our expertise or understand its value – these outdated formalities are irrelevant to the bottom line.

When I interact with their senior manager, he starts a monologue about his own experience and opinions. When I try to contribute to be polite, he ignores what I say and goes back to the monologue. He seems to be very self-centered.

When we complain about an incompetent employee at one of our branches, they say she's from a wealthy family, and refuse to discipline her for her failure to perform. Why would they hire someone with no qualifications in the first place?

Performance-based compensation is the fairest system. They want to compensate our joint venture team on the basis of seniority, but we'll lose our best employees if we don't reward them in proportion to their performance.

### Birthright about Achievement

We sent a senior executive to this negotiation to show how seriously we take it. He knows everything about our company. They sent a 30-year-old who's been with their company for two years! Are they trying to insult us?

That young company exploded on the scene last year, but who knows whether they'll be able to sustain rapid growth? We'll keep an eye on them and see what we think in a couple of years.

Our company has been in business for nearly a century, and our partners take that seriously. But this young group took off their jackets in our first meeting, and used our first names. They were disrespectful of our stature – they seem very immature.

When I interact with their junior employees, they don't listen politely. Each time I say something, they jump in with a comment of their own. People at that company don't seem to respect authority.

They criticized one of our employees, who comes from a powerful family, as "incompetent". Don't they understand that her connections are more valuable to us (and by extension to them) than a college degree?

We reward employees based on seniority. They want us to compensate our joint venture team purely on the basis of performance, but then some younger people would make more than more senior employees, causing them to lose face.

## UNIVERSALISM AND PARTICULARISM: ATTITUDES TOWARDS AUTHORITY

### Universalist about Particularists

They want us to revise a contract we already signed. We abide by it ourselves – why would they expect us to make exceptions for them?

Slipped deadlines are damaging our customer relationships. Why can't they develop a realistic schedule and meet it? They don't seem to take their obligations seriously.

We have a schedule for funds transfers, and one of our branches consistently misses it. Sometimes they're early and sometimes they're late. Why can't they just be on time?

The procurement manager we work with is the cousin of the VP, and he's virtually incompetent. Why don't they hold him to the same standards as everyone else?

Several times, this partner has put us in an awkward position by asking for special favors. How can we justify making exceptions for them while we make other partners stick to the rules?

Our new incentive program is fair because it rewards employees for their performance. But one of our branches is fighting it. Don't they see that everyone needs to have the same criteria for compensation?

This potential partner claims they can get special treatment from the compliance inspectors because of their government connections. Don't they realize this kind of favoritism would be unethical, even if they don't do anything illegal?

They seem to be fighting the new process controls we implemented. They try to get around them rather than complying. Don't they understand they're necessary to the quality of our products?

### Particularist about Universalists

We had no way of predicting that a storm would damage our facility. Why won't they accommodate us when they know this is a special situation?

Schedules are estimates – who can say what's going to come up? Why can't they factor the unexpected into their schedules and adapt to surprises?

By making funds transfers based on the exchange rate, rather than the date, we've saved the company a lot of money over the past year. Do they really value an arbitrary schedule over saving money?

We all have to take care of family members, so naturally, people with good connections get special favors. We all work around this fact – why can't they?

We've done business with them for years, but you'd think we were complete strangers – they won't give us the slightest concessions. Doesn't our relationship mean anything to them?

One of our employees lost his wife this year, and has had a poor sales year as a result. The new incentive program at corporate is going to penalize him even further at this difficult time. Is that really fair?

We've spent years cultivating the dominant political party to ease our way through the process, and this is part of our value proposition to them. Why don't they recognize the usefulness of these connections?

We have an excess of bureaucracy already, and they want to add more. Rules just limit our flexibility and waste time. We always do our best to find ways around this sort of trap.

## RELATIONSHIP AND TASK: ATTITUDES TOWARDS ACCOMPLISHING GOALS

### Relationship about Task

We’ve been trying to get to know them at cultural events and meals, but they seem to resist this. How else can we decide whether their corporate philosophy is a good fit for ours?

It’s time-consuming to create strong business relationships. It would be a waste of time to skip from one partner to another—we would lose continuity in our products and develop a reputation for instability. We want partnerships that last.

It’s better to be sure our companies are a good fit than risk a bad relationship. Why are they in such a hurry to talk contracts? We’re just getting to know one another.

We took them to our manager’s country house to honor them and to show them that our company has provided a good living to our employees. But they didn’t seem to get the message or appreciate the hospitality.

That interviewee had strange expectations. He wanted an exhaustive list of specific job duties. Employees should do whatever is needed, growing and adapting as needs change, and we evaluate them on compatibility and flexibility.

Their employees work the required number of hours each week and then go home. They don’t socialize outside of work. They don’t seem to have any company spirit.

Our division manager is moving to a new house next week, and of course we’re all going to help out. It’s inconvenient for some of us, but the boss is the boss. Besides, how else would people get moved?

As president, I’m proud that our senior management includes my family members and close friends—people I know I can trust. That says a lot about the cohesiveness and stability of the company.

### Task about Relationship

We came here to do business, and they keep taking us to museums and banquets. We have to go home soon and we haven’t even started business discussions. Are they serious about this deal?

It’s easy to create a trial partnership and end it if it doesn’t work out. It would be a waste of time to spend years developing relationships. We change partners depending on who offers us the most at a given time.

We don’t need to know the names of their children to do business – all we need is a good contract. Why do they keep bringing up these personal topics?

They drove us out to the country mansion of one of the managers. He must have wanted to impress us with how much money he has. The quality of their products is what we care about—we don’t need to waste time touring people’s homes.

I’m used to knowing exactly what is expected of me, and to being evaluated according to my execution of specific duties. Clarity on the criteria for promotions and salary increases ensures that the system is logical and fair.

They spend time with each other after work, and even on weekends. They have to take customers out socializing—there’s no end to it. When we’re working with them, our family life suffers.

Their division manager is moving next week, and he asked everyone to show up and help him get moved. They don’t seem to have any boundaries - they can never get away from that hierarchy, and the top people abuse their privileges.

We have policies to prevent relatives from working in the same division, and if two employees marry, one has to leave the division. Nepotism results in favoritism and bad business decisions.

# INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM: ATTITUDES TOWARDS COLLABORATION AND REWARD

## Individualist about Collectivists

Why are there so many of them at this meeting? Who has the real negotiating authority? If he/she is competent, why are the others here?

Why are decisions taking so long? Did they give our partnership low priority? Are they stalling? Maybe they're not serious about doing business with us.

Every time we take a break, they have a private meeting. It seems like they're plotting some secret strategy. It's unnerving.

When I ask one of them even simple questions, they say "I don't know", or "I'll check", and then come back later with the answer. Sometimes, we just need an estimate. Can't they think for themselves?

Whenever we come up with a creative suggestion, it takes them weeks to come back with a response. Why are they so inflexible?

Once the contract is signed, I'll call a meeting at HQ to let everyone know what has been decided. I hope Marketing doesn't give me a hard time about the deadline for the new collateral.

Once they finally make a decision, it will probably take them just as long to start implementation. I should have plenty of time to get internal consensus from our various departments.

I want to make them feel like part of our team since we'll be working together, so I gave them some "inside" information. They can count on us to be friendly.

They hoard information, and won't tell us what's going on internally. If we'd known about that problem, we could have helped. They don't seem to trust us – they don't treat us like real partners.

We singled out a member of their team for special thanks to let everyone to know what a great job she had done. We want to be sure she gets full credit for her hard work, which doesn't always seem to be rewarded.

## Collectivist about Individualists

Why did they send just one person? How can he have all the knowledge necessary to make informed decisions? Don't they take doing business with us seriously?

How is this person making decisions so quickly? Is she considering all the angles? Does she really speak for all the business units that will be affected by this agreement? Things are moving too fast.

We need to talk amongst ourselves whenever there's a break so we can be sure we're all in agreement. Then no one will misrepresent the group's position. Why do they seem surprised?

If you ask three of them the same question, you get three different answers. Which one is representing the company? A unified front is the very least you can expect from a competent team.

When they change direction, we have to go back to all our departments to discuss the implications of the latest change. Why are they so capricious?

Everyone who needs to know about this discussion has provided input. It was worth taking the extra time to get Marketing on board – now we're all on the same page.

They make decisions quickly, so we can probably expect them to ramp up rapidly once we've agreed. That suits us fine – we got consensus before we agreed to their terms, so we can start immediately.

We want them to respect us as a team, so we'll keep any challenges we're having to ourselves, and not allow them to show. They can count on us to be professional.

They ask prying questions, and make us uncomfortable. We try to solve problems ourselves before we notify them. Although we work for the same company, we're still from different teams.

Instead of praising the entire team, they identified only one member, setting her apart from the rest and embarrassing her. Other team members were resentful—it was tactless and insulting to the rest.

## SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM ORIENTATION: ATTITUDES TOWARDS TIME

### Short-Term about Long-Term

We need to get our new partnership in place and begin implementing immediately. The opportunity cost of waiting is high. Why are they so cautious?

The past isn't that important. We learn from it, and then we move on. We need to constantly look to the future. Decisions need to be made quickly.

The pressure we're under to show results in the next quarter causes us to be agile and innovative. We need them to be more responsive.

Achieving good short-term results and adapting to change is the way to establish a reputation. If an idea doesn't work, we'll go in a new direction.

Meeting deadlines and achieving milestones is vital to our reputation. Our partners need to be reliable.

With only three items on the agenda, we expected quick closure to today's meeting, but they belabor every point. Why is this taking so long?

There doesn't seem to be a decision-maker here. They constantly stop and postpone negotiations until they've checked with headquarters. Their method seems very inefficient.

They claim they can't make a decision right now. We need to move forward and “maybe later” isn't an answer we can take back to headquarters.

We chose our team based on their ability and expertise. We brought our best to this negotiation. Why did they send these older managers—they aren't close to the product or the customer.

Why did they get so upset when we re-assigned our head negotiator to another project? The new one is competent and well-briefed.

### Long-Term about Short-Term

Any new partnership needs to be discussed in the context of the history of our company, and implemented in alignment with that history. Why are they so reckless?

Any mistakes we make will be remembered for a long time. We need to consider the implications of decisions we make from every angle.

The importance of establishing a track record over many years causes us to be cautious and thorough. We need them to be more patient.

Building relationships and expanding them carefully over time is the way to establish a reputation. Bad ideas are costly.

We can't know how long things will take; our partners need to be flexible in terms of time.

A series of meetings is necessary to conclude the discussion we began today. Each item on the agenda must be thought through carefully.

They seem surprised when we stop our negotiation to consult with colleagues. Everyone affected by a decision needs to have input. One person making decisions for a whole company is very risky.

The fact that we can't make a decision right now isn't a deal breaker. There's still possibility for the future, but they seem to have a “now or never” attitude.

We chose our team based on seniority and experience. Who are these young upstarts on their team? They haven't been around long enough to know anything about the industry or the market.

Just as we were getting to know their negotiator, he was replaced. What did he do to be reassigned, and how do we trust this new person? Something is wrong here.

## INDIRECTNESS AND DIRECTNESS: EXPLICITNESS IN COMMUNICATION

### Indirect about Direct

When we try to make small talk with them, it seems to confuse them. They don't seem to know the purpose of social conversation. How are we supposed to work with each other if we don't know each other?

When we ask a question, they give us a brief answer with very little context. If they do provide detail, it's in the form of data and statistics. We can't get a good sense of the reasons behind what they say. Maybe they're hiding something.

They seem to want a yes/no answer to every question, no matter how complicated things are. That would be oversimplifying. You have to live with complexity until things become clear.

Yesterday their representative asked us point blank what we thought of a new idea she had. It was a bad idea, but how could we say that to her face? We said it was fine, to keep from embarrassing her. She should have known better than to ask in a way that forced us to tell her no.

They seem well-intentioned, but lack tact and finesse. It's difficult to integrate them into our social events because they seem so unsophisticated. They tend to miss the social signals.

When there's a delicate situation, they tend to blurt out their opinions, even in public. We have to be careful who we introduce them to—who knows what they might say to our partners or customers?

In meetings, they want to go through their bullet points one by one. They don't seem to realize that each one is related to other issues, and when we try to explore things fully, they get impatient.

### Direct about Indirect

When we try to initiate business conversations at dinner, they change the subject to something social. How are we supposed to come to an agreement if we can't get to the point? Are they serious about doing business with us?

They don't give us straight answers. They talk around the point, and give us history and other tangential information that doesn't really answer the question. They don't seem very competent.

They seem to see every possibility as equally likely. It's hard to manage a dozen scenarios at the same time. Why don't they just choose the most probable and outline a Plan A and a Plan B?

It's hard to get a straight answer from them. I asked them today what they thought of a new idea, and they said they liked it, but I could tell something was wrong. The last time this happened, they didn't follow up as promised. Why do they say one thing and do another?

They seem to have a sort of secret code, and everyone knows what everything means—except us. We feel left out, even when they try to include us.

They seem to make a lot of decisions behind the scenes, and meetings don't mean anything—important matters are already decided before we get there. We're left out of the decision-making process.

In meetings, they don't stick to the agenda. They go off on tangents, and waste time talking about things that are only distantly related to the point.

## NEUTRAL AND EXPRESSIVE: ATTITUDES TOWARDS EXPRESSING EMOTION

### Expressive about Neutral

They don't seem very engaged by anything we suggest. Maybe they aren't really interested in partnering with us.

They seem stand-offish when we try to chat with them or ask questions. Their silence makes us overcompensate, and we end up doing all the talking.

When there's a problem, instead of telling us, they say something non-committal—or even positive. We don't know what's real, so we can't fix what's wrong.

They're so impassive we can't tell what they think of anything. They drain our energy when we interact with them.

We had a general idea of what we wanted to accomplish, but it's pointless to try to outline a detailed agenda and stick to every point. Discussions have to develop naturally.

I wish they would express what they're feeling so we could change direction as needed. We feel like we're wandering in the dark.

When I tried to hug him, he seemed to shrivel up. I thought we were friends.

A free exchange of ideas with everyone brainstorming at the same time is creative and moves the conversation ahead. It's a good way to stimulate creative energy.

We have to constantly look for feedback—silence, vagueness, lack of eye contact—to know if something's wrong. It's exhausting.

Strong relationships with my colleagues and a good working environment are important to me, but they don't seem to form strong bonds at work.

They seem to be tense at work—formal in their dress and manner, and no one smiles. It seems cold and unfriendly.

Their managers should be more intuitive and seek consensus. You have to deal with people's feelings effectively to motivate them to do their best work.

### Neutral about Expressive

They get upset about minor points, and problems escalate from there. Maybe they aren't disciplined enough to partner with us.

They talk constantly, about nothing in particular. They ask personal questions and tell us about things that have nothing to do with business. It's hard to think with so much chatter.

They blurt out their opinions on every subject. They don't seem to have much tact or self-control.

They get excited about minor details – everything is either wonderful or terrible. They overwhelm us with their emotions.

We had a carefully prepared agenda, and had thought through all the important points. They introduced tangential ideas and pulled us off topic. The discussion isn't going in a useful direction.

I wish they would calm down and behave less emotionally. We feel like there's an explosion due any moment.

They want to hug us and pat us on the back. Even our relatives don't do that!

Thinking carefully before you speak and waiting your turn is considerate and efficient. Everyone talking at once is impolite and messy.

We have to work to move forward logically. The conversation is constantly interrupted by tangential discussions. It's exhausting.

Financial reward and interesting work are important to me. I don't need to socialize with my colleagues—I see enough of them at the office.

At work, they act as if they were at home, and spend a lot of time socializing instead of working. It seems inefficient and unprofessional.

Their managers should be more decisive and assertive. You have to be aggressive to provide the leadership necessary for the best result.

## SCHEDULE AND FLOW: APPROACHES TO TIME MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

### Schedule about Flow

They were late to the meeting, and we didn't have time to conclude our business before our next appointment. Don't they respect our time? It's unprofessional and insulting.

We'll get this done by e-mail—it's faster and less expensive than meeting face to face. There's no need to waste time on small talk with colleagues. Efficiency is what counts.

We never know when meetings with this partner will start. Why do they say "three o'clock" if they don't mean it? What does "three o'clock" really mean to them?

They've rescheduled our meeting three times. They don't seem to have very good organizational skills.

After months of work on a proposal, they came up with a new direction at the last minute. We had everything worked out. Why couldn't they suggest this sooner?

They talk on the phone, direct people in the office and type on the computer all at once. How can they give full attention to our project if they work like this?

We agreed on a list of things that needed to be done, but they won't stick to the plan we made. There's no way to predict when things will finish—it's very disorganized.

We missed one of our project milestones. Now it will be difficult to get back on schedule. This is very unfortunate.

Their VP took two calls in the middle of our meeting, and stopped the meeting both times. This wastes time, and is disrespectful of the work we have to get done. They should focus on the matter at hand.

### Flow about Schedule

We gave them our full attention, and were willing to spend as long with them as was needed. But they rushed off to another appointment before we were done. That's really pointless.

We'll schedule a meeting with them to discuss this. It's important to talk in person when there's a lot at stake so you can get a clear idea of how others are reacting. Maintaining relationships is what counts.

Appointments are really just estimates. We can't guarantee what time a meeting will begin. Rushing one appointment to get to another would be rude and unproductive.

They're inflexible about appointment changes. They seem to care more about their schedule than having the right people there.

We had an outstanding idea, but they complained that adding it so late was inconvenient. What's the difference—a good idea is a good idea. They need to get their priorities straight!

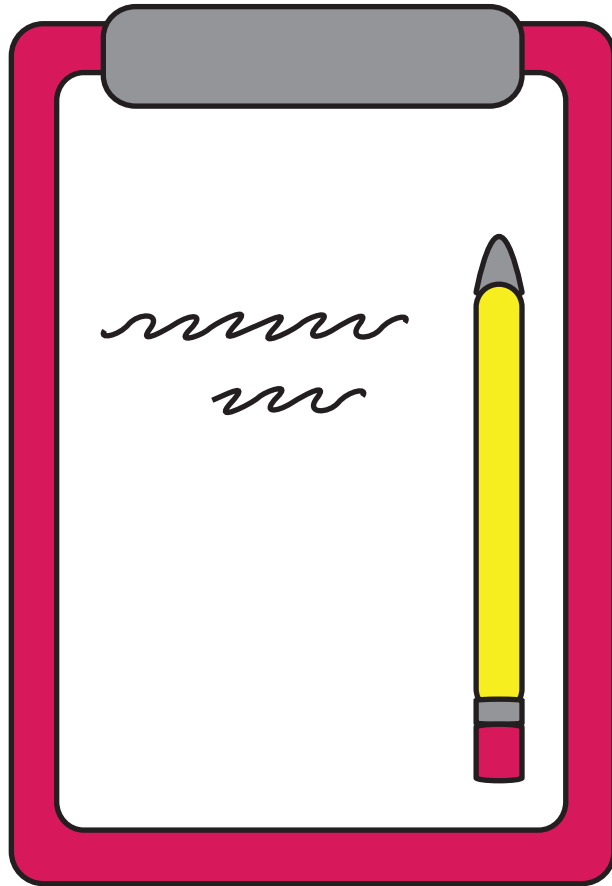
They try to control things and deal with each issue in a set order. How can they take care of a complex project if they can only manage one thing at a time?

The plan they made at the beginning of the project quickly became obsolete, so we've taken things as they've come. Plans are estimates, not manifestos.

We've done a great job of meeting milestones, with just one not complete. We may have to work extra hard at the end, but that's just what it takes sometimes.

We have to keep multiple projects moving, so it's natural to take calls during a meeting. They were upset about this, but if they were the ones calling, they'd appreciate our responsiveness.





GATHERING DATA



## CONSTRUCTING YOUR ANALYSIS

- Your initial analysis will be preliminary. Culture is complex and constantly evolving, and you should plan to strengthen and revise your profile as time and exposure permit
- The more sources of information you refer to the stronger your analysis will be. Reading about the destination you have analyzed will help you see how history and geography have contributed to the cultural features you have noticed.
- Take care not to document tourist culture. Be sure you are observing what the “locals” in your destination do rather than what tourists do. Ask a local, guide or hotel concierge to suggest neighborhoods where local people live, shop and work.
- When you encounter a contradiction (two very different approaches in two companies you visit, for example), try to analyze the reason for the difference, and ask questions if possible. External factors such as the educational background of a CEO, predominant immigrant ethnicity in the region, etc. can often be identified as contributing factors.
- Compare behavior in multiple contexts. Don’t conclude that people in your destination city have a casual attitude towards time just because you see people relaxing in a park—parks everywhere encourage relaxation. Compare behavior across demographic categories, including people of various ages, occupations, etc.
- Beware of individual variation. One person’s behavior/opinion is not a basis for typing a population. Observe several people in the same situation/ask several people the same question.
- When faced with conflicting evidence you cannot resolve, ask people who are knowledgeable about the local culture to confirm a trend. A co-worker, bartender, hotel concierge or tour guide can be helpful, but be careful not to rely too heavily on reported information. Local “experts” should be used as tie-breakers, not primary sources of information, and they may not speak for the majority.
- Be aware of variation within a single country. If your analysis is of a particular city or company, stick to it closely. If you’re trying to characterize a region or country, however, visiting more than one location will give you a better idea of broader tendencies.
- Keep in mind that there are differences between large cities and rural areas, old cities and new ones, wealthy populations and poor ones. Draw your conclusions with the context in mind.
- It is possible for a location to demonstrate relative neutrality regarding two features, or two demonstrate two opposing features at the same time due to historical or other factors. If you find this sort of conflict, don’t insist on choosing one feature—look for explanations for the existence of both.
- Refer to the cultural literature on the country of your analysis referred to in these materials. While they may be generalizations, cultural texts indicate country-specific and regional patterns of culture, and can be helpful.

# ACHIEVEMENT AND BIRTHRIGHT: ATTITUDES TOWARDS STATUS

## ACHIEVEMENT

## BIRTHRIGHT

### What You Can Learn from Observation

Interaction between juniors and seniors is relatively informal.

Interaction between juniors and seniors is relatively formal.

Bosses manage their own belongings, environment.

Juniors may carry briefcases, open doors, drive bosses.

### What to Look for during Conversation

Seniors interact with juniors as equals.

Seniors take a teaching/coaching tone.

Seniors may acknowledge their lack of information or expertise.

Seniors unlikely to acknowledge their lack of information or expertise.

### What to Look for in Written Materials (brochures, newspapers, job ads, signage)

Accomplishments and awards are listed on business cards, mentioned in articles, etc.

Title, division and company are listed on business cards, mentioned in articles, etc.

Advertised products and services promote upward mobility through performance.

Advertised products and services promote getting the most out of relationships.

### What to Look for during Meetings

People on the same team behave roughly the same way. People talk to others regardless of their rank. People contribute equally in conversation.

Senior people are more formal than juniors. People talk most to others of their own rank. Senior people contribute more; juniors listen more.

People answer questions and make suggestions based on their knowledge and creativity.

People answer questions and make suggestions as instructed by the senior member.

When senior people are present, their manner is relaxed and interactive.

When senior people are present, their manner is formal and scripted.

Seniors explain their requirements and preferences relatively clearly.

Seniors provide minimal explanation and expect juniors to intuit what they want.

### What to Look for during Presentations

When senior people are present, their manner is relaxed and interactive.

When senior people present, their manner is formal and scripted.

Seniors listening to a presentation will be alert.

Seniors listening to a presentation may appear to disregard it or sleep.

### What to Look for on Company Visits

Employees are rewarded and promoted on the basis of performance relative to their job description.	Employees are rewarded and promoted on the basis of flexibility, effectiveness and length of service.
Education and expertise acquired outside the company are highly valued in employees.	Familiarity with the company culture is highly valued in employees.
Junior and senior employees have similar work environments and advantages.	Seniority entails perks (separate restrooms, company cars, club memberships, etc.).
Rules and privileges are similar for everyone.	Senior/influential people have more freedom and privilege.
Founding team members are treated like others, and may move on.	Founding team members are highly valued and tend to stay with the company.
Companies promote an image of innovation and change.	Companies promote an image of stability and reliability.
Junior employees may earn more than their managers as a result of performance-based incentives.	Managers earn more than their employees based on seniority.

# UNIVERSALISM AND PARTICULARISM: ATTITUDES TOWARDS AUTHORITY

## UNIVERSALISM

## PARTICULARISM

### What You Can Learn from Observation

Dress and behavior is conservative, and reflects the values of the environment.	Dress and behavior is idiosyncratic, and expresses individual preferences.
People are respectful of rules and policies.	People may disregard rules according to the situation (“I’m in a hurry”, “just this once”, etc.).
Traffic tends to be orderly. Lanes are indicated. Signs use direct language and are not defaced or ignored.	Traffic tends to be haphazard. There may be no markings or signs, or these may be defaced or ignored.
People wait for the light and cross at intersections.	People cross against the light/jaywalk.
People wait their turn in orderly lines.	People mass in groups or “cut” in line.
Signs issue orders and describe penalties.	Signs appeal to human nature and values.
Public transportation operates on time.	Public transportation operates haphazardly.
People pay for tickets and sit in their assigned class.	People jump turnstiles and move up in class.
Buildings and streets are clean.	Buildings may be covered in graffiti.
People take responsibility for keeping public areas clean.	People litter public areas.

### What to Look for during Conversation

People dress and behave according to societal norms.	People dress and behave as individuals.
People express respect for official rules and policies.	People express views and opinions that may contradict official rules and policies.

### What to Look for in Written Materials (brochures, newspapers, job ads, signage)

Signs issue orders, describe penalties.	Signs appeal to right to choose to do the right thing.
Ads emphasize benefit to the individual.	Ads emphasize benefit to the social network.
Writing style is orderly, to the point.	Writing style is creative, flowery.

### What to Look for during Meetings

People follow similar rules and procedures regarding arrival time, behavior during meetings, responding to questions, etc.	There is individual variation in arrival times, behavior during meetings. Individuals express their own opinions freely.
Based on an assumption that rules will be followed, legal documents are carefully worded.	There may be lengthy discussion about measures to make sure rules are followed, regardless of legal documents.
NDAs, MOUs and contracts are preferred to guarantee partner compliance.	Strong relationships are considered the best way to ensure partner compliance.

### What to Look for during Presentations

Presenters tend to stick to specific talking points and observe time limits.	Presenters tend to diverge from specific talking points, and may go over time.
Presentations are likely to be planned and rehearsed.	Presentations may be largely unscripted, with spontaneous digressions.
During Q and A, answers stick closely to original topic.	Presenters allow themselves to be pulled into new topics.

### What to Look for on Company Visits

Policies are clearly specified/displayed.	Rules and policies are not emphasized.
Rules apply fairly equally to everyone.	Rules apply less to senior/influential people.
Job descriptions and criteria for advancement are clearly articulated.	Job descriptions are vague and advancement is determined by relationship with co-workers, supervisor.
Contracts are lengthy, detailed and carefully worded.	Contracts are relatively short, general and vague.
Contracts are followed closely once in place.	Contracts are considered a guide, to be renegotiated when conditions change.
A trusted partner is one that honors commitments.	A trusted partner is one that has been tested over a period of time.

# RELATIONSHIP AND TASK: ATTITUDES TOWARDS ACCOMPLISHING GOALS

RELATIONSHIP	TASK
<b>What You Can Learn from Observation</b>	
Houses are private and concealed by walls, shutters, etc.	Houses are relatively open, available to public view.
General directions are given, sometimes with non-specific reference to landmarks.	Detailed directions are given, making reference to streets and numbers.
Greetings and unplanned conversations are lengthy.	Greetings and unplanned conversations are brief.
Text and images on products for sale emphasize results, emotional benefits, etc.	Text and images on products for sale provide information about contents, ingredients, nutrition, etc.
Clerks in retail stores may guide customers personally or recommend another place to buy items they don't carry.	Clerks in retail stores provide information succinctly.
<b>What to Look for during Conversation</b>	
Examples contain stories involving digressions and elaborate context.	Examples are organized chronologically, without tangents.
Directions are general ("over that way", "by the library").	Directions are detailed ("turn right halfway down X street, 3rd building on the left").
Speakers provide lengthy context in answering questions.	Speakers provide detailed answers to questions.
Ask locals how they think people there would respond to the self-assessment question.	Ask locals how they think people there would respond to the self-assessment question.
<b>What to Look for in Written Materials (brochures, newspapers, job ads, signage)</b>	
Contextual information is provided, including historical background, tangents, and opinion.	Information and descriptions are succinct, focusing on the delivery of facts or arguments.
Written materials are wordy, flowery, poetic and vague to convey emotion.	Written materials use precise language for clarity.
Structure may involve lengthy descriptive paragraphs.	Structure includes bullets and lists, with succinct paragraphs.
Text may cover the page in non-linear arrangements.	Text tends to be laid out in linear form.
Colors are bold and diverse, with graphics splashed around the page.	Colors are restrained, and graphics are arranged within borders.
<b>What to Look for during Meetings</b>	
Meetings may have no agenda or a general statement of goals. Communication may wander away from the specified topics.	Meetings are organized according to an agenda whose points are followed in order.
Greetings are time-consuming and may include questions about life, family, etc..	Greetings among participants are perfunctory.
Meetings begin with sometimes lengthy social interaction, followed by the business discussion.	People "get down to business" quickly in meetings, and socialize afterwards if there is time.



### What to Look for during Presentations

Presenters tend to speak in generalities.	Presenters tend to convey information explicitly.
Answers are general, without necessarily addressing the point of the question.	Answers are succinct, precisely addressing questions.
Speakers talk about the present in terms of past history and philosophy, illustrate with stories.	Speakers emphasize current issues and the future, illustrate with examples.
Presenters improvise.	Presentations are highly structured.
Presenters are easily diverted to related topics and tangents.	Presenters stick to agendas, written talking points.

### What to Look for on Company Visits

Job descriptions and criteria for advancement are general and vague.	Job descriptions and criteria for advancement are detailed and specific.
Promotions are based on effectiveness in teamwork and relationship with managers.	Promotions are based on performance relative to specific duties.
Employees engage in group work and social interaction.	Employees focus on tasks, and may have little interaction with one another.
Photos, souvenirs and other personal objects displayed.	Few personal articles displayed by employees.

# INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM: ATTITUDES TOWARDS COLLABORATION AND REWARD

## INDIVIDUALIST

## COLLECTIVIST

### What You Can Learn from Observation

In restaurants, people order individually.	In restaurants, everyone may order the same thing.
Meals are served in individual servings eaten by one person.	Meals may be served in group portions shared by everyone.
People often spend leisure time alone.	People usually spend leisure time in groups.
People demonstrate individual personality through their clothing and behavior.	People blend in with others in their clothing and behavior.

### What to Look for during Conversation

People demonstrate individual attributes such as wit and, charm.	People present themselves as reliable and trustworthy.
People freely express personal opinions, which may not conform to majority views.	People avoid casually expressing opinions that conflict with majority views, and take care to identify them as personal opinions.
Personal hobbies and areas of interest may be discussed with strangers.	Individual preferences and activities may be reserved for conversation with intimates.

### What to Look for in Written Materials (brochures, newspapers, job ads, signage)

Promotional materials are written to appeal to “decision maker”.	Promotional materials are written to appeal to all concerned with a decision.
Advertisements (e.g. vacation packages) geared to individuals and couples.	Advertisements (e.g. vacation packages) geared to groups.

### What to Look for during Meetings

One person may represent a company in negotiations.	Many people represent a company in negotiations.
An individual may have decision-making authority in meetings or negotiations.	Decisions are made by groups made of representatives of relevant organizations.
Answers to questions may reflect personal opinions.	Answers to questions indicate group consensus.
People may use guesses or estimates to answer questions outside their area of expertise.	People check/confer with others/defer to others rather than answer questions outside their area of expertise.
In negotiations, those present are able to make decisions.	Negotiators need to break and check with others or hold separate meetings in order to get an answer.
Decisions are made quickly by an individual or small group.	Decisions take a long time, as they may involve building consensus among a large group.

### What to Look for during Presentations

One or two presenters cover diverse material.	Multiple presenters cover topics in area of their expertise.
Presenters may posit answers to questions outside their area of responsibility.	Presenters defer to others, check and return with answers, or respond that they don't know when asked questions outside their area of responsibility.

### What to Look for on Company Visits

Employee attrition is considered natural, and members are replaced by people with similar skills.	Employee attrition is considered indication of a problem in the team or company and handled as a social issue.
To solve problems, individuals who have developed solutions promote their ideas to others.	To solve problems, groups meet to discuss, with each member contributing, whether or not they have a solution to suggest.
Decision-making is majority rule or top-down.	Decision-making is consensus-based.
Employees dress and behave in ways that express their individuality.	Employees dress and behave in ways that emphasize company affiliation. Company logos may be prominent.
Individuals make decisions.	Groups make decisions.
Employees are recognized and rewarded as individuals.	Employees are recognized and rewarded as part of a team.
Innovation and revolutionary thinking are prized.	Contribution to the existing model is prized.

## SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM ORIENTATION: ATTITUDES TOWARDS TIME

SHORT-TERM	LONG-TERM
<b>What You Can Learn from Observation</b>	
People visit modern buildings, which are valued for their innovation.	People visit old buildings and historical sites which are valued for their history and preserved with care.
Tour guides emphasize modern accomplishments over past history.	Tour guides emphasize past glory over modern innovation.
<b>What to Look for during Conversation</b>	
Descriptions and explanations tend to focus on the present and future.	Descriptions and explanations tend to refer to history and tradition.
<b>What to Look for in Written Materials (brochures, newspapers, job ads, signage)</b>	
Corporate materials emphasize current and recent performance and plans for the future.	Corporate materials emphasize past history and philosophy as a context for current and future plans.
Product materials emphasize innovation, uniqueness and upgrades.	Product materials emphasize history of value, reliability and service contracts.
<b>What to Look for during Meetings</b>	
Punctuality is valued; time is money, and should not be wasted.	Punctuality is not critical; time is ongoing and infinite.
Emphasis is on moving quickly and effectively.	Emphasis is on proceeding with caution.
Current opportunity and threat are emphasized.	Continuity and reputation are emphasized.
Relationships are rather utilitarian and based on current needs. When old relationships fade, new ones are easily made.	Relationships are long-lasting and carefully maintained. Resentment results when they are allowed to lapse; enemies are forever.
<b>What to Look for during Presentations</b>	
Presentations focus on the present and future, without much discussion of the past.	Presentations emphasize the past as background for the present and future.

### What to Look for on Company Visits

A goal of quick response to opportunity and threat is a motivator for change.	A goal of maintaining continuity and reputation is a source of caution.
The current situation and future opportunity are the focus of decision making; today's conditions are unique.	The past is always referred to in decision making as the context for assessing the present and future.
Product innovations and upgrades are emphasized as a means of customer attraction.	Product reliability and customer service are emphasized as a basis for customer retention.
Sales cycles are designed to be short for incremental performance improvement.	Sales cycles are designed to be long for sustained financial performance.
Employee bonuses and raises are awarded soon after performance to encourage short-term performance.	Employee bonuses and raises are awarded well after performance to encourage long-term customer retention.
Strategy involves constant analysis of recent performance to modify direction quickly.	Strategy tends to favor staying on course through ups and downs and letting results play out over time.
Changes and new directions are justified in terms of today's world and current opportunity.	Changes and new directions are justified in terms of recreating past success.

# INDIRECTNESS AND DIRECTNESS: EXPLICITNESS IN COMMUNICATION

## INDIRECT

## DIRECT

### What You Can Learn from Observation

Clerks in retail stores may be reluctant to acknowledge that they don't carry a particular item.

Clerks in retail stores are direct in explaining that they don't carry a particular item.

Disagreement is not overtly expressed in public.

Disagreement may be overtly expressed and overheard in public.

### What to Look for during Conversation

Personal opinions that might offend are avoided, so conversation with strangers is superficial.

Personal opinions may be expressed freely in conversation with strangers.

Negative responses may be expressed as polite avoidance of a topic or even agreement.

Negative responses are expressed directly.

Body language, tone of voice or humor may be used to convey negative response while avoiding overt disagreement.

People indicate disagreement openly.

A response may begin with praise, followed by criticism, to soften negativity.

Criticism and disagreement are voiced directly.

### What to Look for in Written Materials (brochures, newspapers, job ads, signage)

In advertisement: personal contact (phone call or in-person visit) is recommended.

In advertisements: impersonal action (visit our website, send e-mail for information) is recommended.

Information in public media is couched in background and context.

Information in public media is conveyed succinctly.

Products in stores refer indirectly to medical conditions (hemorrhoids, for example), issues of personal hygiene, etc.

Products in stores explicitly mention medical conditions (hemorrhoids, for example), issues of personal hygiene, etc.

### What to Look for during Meetings

People establish general agendas and expect to follow them loosely.

People establish detailed agendas and expect to follow them closely.

Problems and conflicts are tabled, to be discussed later.

People openly discuss problems and conflicts.

Details are couched in stories and other context, leaving some questions unanswered.

Details are discussed thoroughly.

Important matters may be discussed and decided in private, personal settings, then announced in public contexts.

Important matters likely to be discussed, decided and announced in official, public contexts.

Closed door meetings may be considered necessary and appropriate for sensitive matters.

Closed door meetings are not used to avoid conflict, and may be considered an indication of untrustworthiness.

### What to Look for during Presentations

Concepts are explained rather generally, and answers to questions may include considerable context.	Concepts are clearly defined, and answers to questions are concise.
Presentations are rambling and may include history and storytelling.	Presentations are orderly and precise, and focus on conveying specific information.
Audience questions may be tangential, and speakers allow themselves to be redirected.	Audience questions likely to be closely related to topic, and if not, speakers redirect back to topic.

### What to Look for on Company Visits

Strong managers are those who motivate employees through positive feedback and personal example.	Strong managers are those who guide employees through positive and negative feedback and instruction.
Poor employee performance is not acknowledged openly, but through lack of promotion or lessening of responsibilities.	Poor employee performance is acknowledged directly.

# NEUTRAL AND EXPRESSIVE: ATTITUDES TOWARDS EXPRESSING EMOTION

NEUTRAL	EXPRESSIVE
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### What You Can Learn from Observation

People tend to speak quietly, in a subdued manner.	People tend to speak loudly and in an animated manner.
Non-verbal behavior (facial expressions, hand gestures, etc.) is restrained.	Non-verbal behavior is active.
Laughter and conflict are minimized.	Laughter and conflict are easy to observe.
Cell phone calls are handled quietly, with speakers moving away from others while talking.	Cell phone calls may be disruptive, with speakers speaking loudly while others converse.

### What to Look for during Conversation

People tend to avoid expressing their feelings until they get to know others well.	People are relaxed about sharing their feelings and opinions with casual acquaintances.
Conversations are even in tone and relatively quiet.	Conversations are illustrated by hand gestures, loudness and laughter.

### What to Look for in Written Materials (brochures, newspapers, job ads, signage)

In advertisements and articles, information is delivered dispassionately.	In advertisements and articles, information is delivered with an appeal to the emotions.
In articles or descriptions, information emphasizes facts and the order of events.	Descriptions include emotional information (people's reaction to facts, the writer's attitude or opinion, etc.).
Visual content has emotionally neutral impact.	Visual content has strong emotional impact.
Colors are restrained and graphics are orderly.	Colors may be bright and varied, and graphics may be bold or "explosive".

### What to Look for during Meetings

Arguments appeal to logic.	Arguments appeal to emotion.
Descriptions are minimal.	Descriptions are rich in adjectives.
People speak evenly during disagreements.	People speak more loudly and with more gestures during conflict.
Joking is infrequent, even in relaxed situations, and responses are quiet.	Joking is common in relaxed situations and responses can be loud and disorderly.



### What to Look for during Presentations

Presentations are even in tone.	Presentations are illustrated by hand gestures, loudness and laughter.
Presenters seek to convey information.	Presenters seek to engage audience and create a relationship.
Presenters answer questions directly, providing information requested with little elaboration.	Presenters engage actively with questions, elaborating on answers and allowing themselves to be drawn off topic.
Presenters' engagement with the audience is limited to conveying information.	Presenters take time to engage personally with the audience.

### What to Look for on Company Visits

People describe their work in terms of duty and commitment.	People describe their work in terms of passion and opportunity.
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# SCHEDULE AND FLOW: APPROACHES TO TIME MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

SCHEDULE	FLOW
<b>What You Can Learn from Observation</b>	
People tend to walk briskly and purposefully, checking the time periodically.	People tend either to be relaxed when walking or running rapidly.
Public transportation operates according to published time tables, and vehicles depart and arrive as scheduled.	Public transportation may operate without published time tables and vehicles may not depart and arrive as scheduled.
People eat relatively quickly during the work day, keep track of the time, and leave soon after eating.	When eating during the work day, people are relaxed and may stay in place for some time after finishing the meal.
<b>What to Look for during Conversation</b>	
Conversations may be brief and hurried, and limited by other appointments and activities.	Conversations may be lengthy and relaxed, and speakers unconcerned about getting to other appointments and activities.
People seem to be very aware of the time.	People seem to relax and forget unconcerned about the time.
<b>What to Look for in Written Materials (brochures, newspapers, job ads, signage)</b>	
Timetables for transportation systems, store hours, parking rules, etc. are prominent in written materials.	Timetables for transportation systems, store hours, parking rules, etc. may not be included in written materials.
Items on lists (things to consider, problems to watch out for) are listed chronologically.	Items on lists (things to consider, problems to watch out for) are listed randomly.
Information is provided to help organize the reader's thinking.	Information is provided to make the reader aware of options, components, problems etc. to consider.
<b>What to Look for during Meetings</b>	
People are generally on time or slightly early for meetings.	People arrive at various times during meetings.
Attendees arriving late apologize and join meeting with as little disruption as possible.	Attendees arriving late may disrupt meeting with greetings, and may not apologize for lateness.
Meeting participants focus on the discussion with little other activity.	Participants may take phone calls and enter/ exit room in the course of meetings.
Meeting agendas are detailed and followed closely.	Meeting agendas are general and followed loosely.
Tasks are divided into portions and work on first portion begins immediately.	Tasks are divided into phases, and the majority of the work may be done towards the end.

### What to Look for during Presentations

Presentations are even in tone.	Presentations are illustrated by hand gestures, loudness and laughter.
Presenters seek to convey information.	Presenters seek to engage audience and create a relationship.
Presenters answer questions directly, providing information requested with little elaboration.	Presenters engage actively with questions, elaborating on answers and allowing themselves to be drawn off topic.
Presenters' engagement with the audience is limited to conveying information.	Presenters take time to engage personally with the audience.

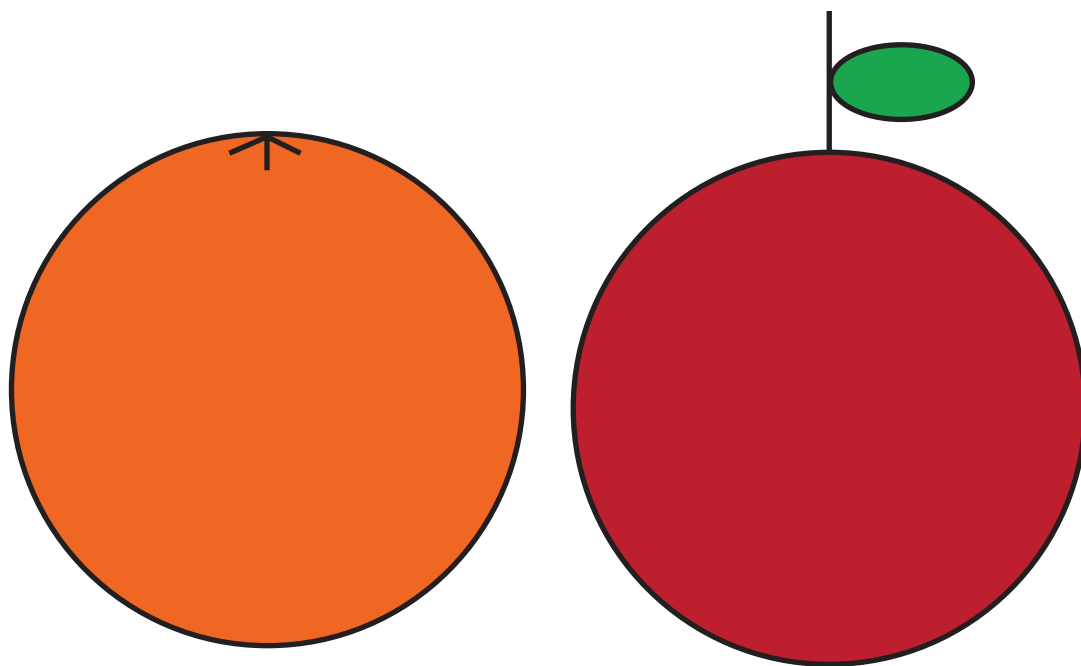
### What to Look for during Presentations

Speakers proceed point-by-point and materials are highly structured.	Speakers ramble and materials may be vague and general.
Speakers proceed methodically and stay on topic.	Speakers change topics, adding in new material or addressing tangents.
Speakers stick close to written materials.	Speakers improvise.
Questions are answered succinctly.	Questions result in digressions.

### What to Look for on Company Visits

Company history is perceived as a linear sequence of events.	Company history is perceived as a coalescing of events.
Employees and partners are expected to meet deadlines regardless of circumstances.	Meeting deadlines may be perceived as beyond human control.
Schedules are detailed, linear and specific. When changes occur, schedules are rewritten.	Schedules are general, and assume changes will occur along the way, making detailed plans pointless.
Schedules and milestones are adhered to closely.	Schedules and milestones may change frequently throughout a project.
Missed internal deadlines are considered cause for concern, and efforts are made to return to original schedule.	Missed internal deadlines are considered normal, and resources are reallocated to meet final deadline.
Last minute changes are considered disruptive and problematic.	Last minute changes are considered natural and unavoidable.





COPING WITH DIFFERENCES



## ACHIEVEMENT AND BIRTHRIGHT: ATTITUDES TOWARDS STATUS

### ACHIEVEMENT INTERACTING WITH BIRTHRIGHT

**Goal:** Convey the value of your talent and achievement while displaying respect for influence and seniority.

Intelligence is perceived as having limited value without experience. Avoid pairing “whiz kids” with Birthright leaders.

Expect leaders to be older men. If your lead is young or female, have an older executive from your side introduce him/her.

“Borrow” prestige by having a senior person describe the company’s regard for a younger leader.

Treat senior members with formality and respect. Don’t correct or interrupt them; listen more than you talk.

Learn counterparts’ titles and find out how they use them (“Assistant Director Wu”, etc.).

Review titles to understand the relative seniority of your counterparts with respect to each other. Try to match their rank with rank on your side.

Capitalize on their ability to help you navigate their system and learn from them.

Refer to mutual friends, associates and partners to establish a relationship.

Expect extended interpersonal interaction and a focus on building personal rapport.

Focus on understanding and supporting others’ personal feelings.

Don’t praise or reward juniors members individually—seniors take responsibility for success.

Some people’s principal role is to leverage their personal connections or give prestige through their high titles. Look to others for task-related output.

Promotions and compensation are based on seniority and relationships in addition to performance. Prepare for hurt feelings if you fail to consider these human factors.

### BIRTHRIGHT INTERACTING WITH ACHIEVEMENT

**Goal:** Gain respect for your influence and seniority while rewarding talent and achievement.

A person who did not “earn” his/her status may be suspect. Avoid pairing people with influence but little subject knowledge with Achievement leaders.

Expect young leaders who are subject matter experts. Include subject experts on your team to answer their questions.

Have a subject expert explain an older leader’s position in the company to establish value.

An informal, egalitarian attitude doesn’t imply disrespect for senior members. Don’t take offense at young people’s “forwardness”.

Expect to use first names soon after introductions. Choose a nickname if this makes you uncomfortable.

Take the opportunity to get the perspective of counterparts who are different from you in age and perspective.

Use their creativity and energy to advance your collaborative agenda.

Refer to common goals, experience and opportunities to establish a relationship.

Expect a focus on accomplishing goals and maximizing business results.

Focus on building a strong business case and executing effectively.

Give credit where it is due; today’s project leader may be tomorrow’s vice president.

If you assign well-connected low-performers to projects with Achievers, explain their value and role or they will be resented.

Achievement-based promotions and compensation are based on performance. Prepare for resentment if you use non-objective measures or appear to “show favorites”.

## UNIVERSALISM AND PARTICULARISM: ATTITUDES TOWARDS AUTHORITY

### UNIVERSALISTS INTERACTING WITH PARTICULARISTS

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Goal: Maintain a sense of stability while accommodating others' need for flexibility.

- Research potential partners carefully, with attention to their reputation.
- Gain access through a mutual contact or intermediary if possible.
- Plan for business to take a long time and involve changes and surprises.
- Develop a strong relationship. Don't assume that contracts will keep you safe.
- People may seem quirky. If someone seems idiosyncratic to you, confirm reliability with an intermediary.
- Simplify contracts as much as possible and give legal personnel and wording a low profile.
- Be very clear regarding your expectations of contracts' binding nature.
- Prepare to be flexible regarding agreements if conditions change, regardless of the terms of a contract.
- Minimize arbitrary rules—they will create discord. Simplify legal wording as much as possible.
- Explain the importance of your policies and procedures to convince Particularists to comply.
- Use interpersonal relationships rather than rules to gain leverage.
- Introduce changes privately; notify key personnel in advance, anticipating personal reactions.
- Anticipate complex internal relationships that prevent uniform behavior.
- Recognize the value of personal and political connections that facilitate business in a Particularist environment.
- Expect managers to be good motivators rather than technical experts.
- Incompetent people may be valued for their personal connections. Think of this as a kind of expertise and look to others for execution.

### PARTICULARISTS INTERACTING WITH UNIVERSALISTS

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Goal: Maintain the freedom you need to be creative while accommodating others' desire for structure and order.

- Expect an emphasis on the deal rather than the partnership.
- Personal relationships and connections are not necessary to initiate business.
- Expect them to make decisions quickly and according to set guidelines.
- Expect a detailed contract. Don't expect them to modify terms after it's signed.
- Company representatives may demonstrate little individual personality. It may take time to get to know them as individuals.
- Don't take a preference for contracts and legal wording personally, but prepare to abide by any constraints you agree to.
- Include detailed provisions in contracts for any changes you foresee in the business environment.
- Expect an inflexible attitude towards changes to a signed contract unless provisions have been included.
- Prepare for more forms, rules and procedures, more frequent audits and tighter control than usual.
- Explain your constraints when Universalists' policies and procedures are counterproductive.
- Explain facts and structures rather than personal relationships to gain leverage.
- Expect changes to be made publicly, based on principles rather than personal factors.
- Anticipate uniform reactions and unwillingness to make exceptions based on relationships.
- Discussing personal and political connections may be interpreted as implying illegal or unethical activity.
- Expect managers to be technical specialists rather than interpersonal motivators.
- People are judged on expertise and competence. Those who lack these will not be valued in spite of personal connections, family background, etc.



## RELATIONSHIP AND TASK: ATTITUDES TOWARDS ACCOMPLISHING GOALS

RELATIONSHIP INTERACTING WITH TASK	TASK INTERACTING WITH RELATIONSHIP
<p>Goal: Spend the time you need to develop trusting relationships with logic-oriented partners.</p>	<p>Goal: Develop tight agreements in a timely manner with relationship-oriented partners.</p>
<p>Task companies view themselves as groups of individuals paid to produce value. Partnerships are contractual. They tend to expect a quick settlement.</p>	<p>Relationship companies view themselves as organic social entities, and it takes time to integrate a new partner. Business may take longer than you expect.</p>
<p>Task partnerships are based on business opportunity. Expect colleagues to discuss business from the first meeting.</p>	<p>Relationship partnerships are based on trust and friendship. Expect colleagues to avoid discussing business until these have been established.</p>
<p>Prepare for brief, factually-oriented encounters that place little emphasis on interpersonal relations.</p>	<p>Prepare for lengthy social interactions that seem to ignore the business goals of the relationship.</p>
<p>Recognize that an impersonal, logical style is not a sign of coldness or a lack of interest. Try to engage colleagues on the basis of common interests rather than personal questions.</p>	<p>Recognize that personal questions are relevant to the goal of establishing a relationship. Use the opportunity to explore common interests and get to know your colleagues personally.</p>
<p>Lengthy contracts are standard, and may be required by the legal system, so be prepared to spend a lot of time on contract negotiations.</p>	<p>Lengthy getting-to-know-you activities are considered an essential basis for trusting partners, so be prepared to spend a lot of time on social interaction.</p>
<p>Contracts will describe specific, detailed obligations and penalties, so be prepared to be held to a tight standard.</p>	<p>Contracts will be short and general, so be prepared to be flexible regarding the interpretation of wording.</p>
<p>Work colleagues will focus on accomplishing business tasks, and may not interact socially with you. Don't take this personally.</p>	<p>Work colleagues will expect to interact socially with you, even if it disrupts your work at times. Recognize this as an opportunity to develop relationships.</p>
<p>Develop personal relationships with neighbors or club members rather than coworkers to avoid being perceived as unprofessional at work.</p>	<p>Participate in social activities with coworkers outside work time to avoid seeming unfriendly.</p>
<p>Relationships outside work are relaxed, and hierarchy is lessened. Don't interpret a casual attitude towards seniors as a sign of disrespect.</p>	<p>Relationships outside work remain formal, as the hierarchy is still observed. Don't become overly casual with non-peers.</p>
<p>Employees have no obligation to managers away from work. Avoid asking for favors not related to work, which could be perceived as manipulative or insulting.</p>	<p>Employees feel an obligation to their managers even away from work. Helping a manager with a personal project is a good way to build a relationship.</p>
<p>Colleagues will be surprised at relationship-building activities that don't directly address business goals (e.g. hiring inexperienced relatives of partners). Explain why these are important to relationships.</p>	<p>Don't be offended by relationship-building actions that don't directly address business goals (e.g. hiring inexperienced relatives of partners). These may be expected methods of sustaining partnerships.</p>
<p>You will be recognized more for the quality of your work than for your personality. Focus on the task to gain prestige.</p>	<p>You will be recognized as much for your interaction with others as for the quality of your work. Focus on building relationships.</p>
<p>Prepare for complex, explicit rules that everyone is expected to follow. Respect these.</p>	<p>Prepare for a lack of explicit rules and a tendency to ignore those that exist. Prepare to solve problems on your own.</p>

# INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM: ATTITUDES TOWARDS COLLABORATION AND REWARD

## INDIVIDUALIST INTERACTING WITH COLLECTIVIST

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Goal: Convey competence and capability with limited human resources, while assessing progress accurately.

Collectivist negotiating teams tend to be large. Include as many people as possible in negotiations and social events.

Try to match their team members' functions with your own team members. If you're on your own, plan to call home for supporting information.

They will expect detailed information to be provided from the beginning. Be prepared to obtain it.

Allow 2-3 times as much time as you would expect for their consensus-based decision-making process, but expect quick implementation once you have a deal, since everyone on their side is on board.

A response of "I don't know" or "I'll check" reflects the need for a unified "party line". Give them time to clarify with colleagues.

Avoid guessing at answers to questions you aren't sure of. Confer to be sure everyone is on the same page. Answers will be taken as official statements.

Don't expect a Collectivist team to blur its boundaries because you're working on a joint project. Asking questions may be interpreted as spying.

Collectivist groups will protect non-performing members. Don't suggest replacing them or criticize them to their colleagues.

Avoid sharing inside information, especially problems, with Collectivist group members; this could be perceived as a sign of disloyalty or disunity.

Team member attrition may be perceived as a sign of low morale or incompetence. Explain turnover immediately and prepare to answer questions.

Build relationships through social activities and personal interaction. Make an effort to get to know counterparts personally.

Cultivate a friendship with a team member to gain insight into problems, work dynamic, etc.

Social interactions like meals, athletic events or drinking may be good opportunities to ask for context on business interaction.

## COLLECTIVIST INTERACTING WITH INDIVIDUALIST

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Goal: Move quickly enough to satisfy partners while assessing their competence accurately.

Individualist teams may be quite small. Don't expect your team members to be matched with counterparts.

The negotiator(s) may not have detailed information, but you can request that they obtain it for you.

They will expect to address general matters first and deal with details later. You may have to request these.

Expect quick decisions from their side, but watch for slow implementation while the negotiator briefs the rest of the company on the plan and works out details.

Different responses to the same question reflect individual opinions. Don't take this as a sign of disunity or disorganization.

To be sure you're getting an official response, ask whether they are "speaking for the company" or just estimating.

Expect an Individualist team to be casual about group boundaries. Don't perceive this as an attempt to gain privileged information; just be firm.

Individualist groups may speak openly about technical and personnel problems. Don't interpret this as a sign of incompetence or low morale.

Withholding information from Individualist counterparts may be perceived as a sign of problems on your team. Share as much as you can and notify them of problems as early as possible.

Team member attrition is common and not necessarily a sign of problems. Ask questions to assess team morale.

Don't expect a great deal of social interaction with Individualists; you may need to initiate it.

Ask team members directly to gain insight into problems, work dynamic, etc.

Ask for context on business interaction directly.

## SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM ORIENTATION: ATTITUDES TOWARDS TIME

### SHORT-TERM INTERACTING WITH LONG-TERM

**Goal: Promote pro-activity in others by linking initiatives to priorities of stability, continuity and past success.**

Emphasize your proposal's good fit with your partner's history and values.

Emphasize history and stability when describing your company. For a young company, draw on founders' experience or other sources of stability.

Discuss current opportunity in terms of fit with your partner's tradition.

Describe your company's philosophy of partnerships and your need for pro-activity in seizing opportunity, given your business environment.

Begin presentations with historical background and relate present and future to that history.

Frame new ideas in terms of recapturing past successes that had similar strategies.

Frame new ideas in terms of their long-term success; emphasize long-term goals that will be served by current project.

Emphasize any experience that ties the current project to the past—a visit you made to the partner's country in the past, etc.

Recognize that business initiatives are expected to maintain continuity and current direction. Radical shifts will be resisted.

Without a strong relationship, you have no right to expect honorable dealings, so be cautious with new partners.

Expect business dealings to take a long time and involve significant discussion and interaction.

Don't rely on deadlines to get timely action from Long-Term partners; develop a strong relationship to gain leverage.

Moving very slowly doesn't mean they don't want to deal. Don't give up on the relationship. Ask for information on their internal process.

### LONG-TERM INTERACTING WITH SHORT-TERM

**Goal: Maintain stability while meeting others' priorities of innovative thinking and seizing current opportunity.**

Emphasize that your caution is designed to protect your joint endeavor and explain the consequences of a failed endeavor to your company.

Emphasize recent initiatives and performance when describing your company. Refer to projects demonstrating innovation and vigor.

Discuss your approach to decision making in terms of the value your longer-term considerations bring to both sides.

Describe your company's philosophy of partnerships and your need for stability and long-term relationships, given your business environment.

Begin presentations with recent performance and goals and relate your strategy to those factors.

Frame your process in terms of the benefits of long-term thinking to your partner.

Accommodate your partner where possible by taking quick action on any component of a project.

Emphasize any example of innovation that demonstrates your ability to take advantage of opportunity.

Recognize that business initiatives are expected to capture new opportunity. Lengthy decision-making will be resisted.

One collaboration does not guarantee an ongoing relationship. They may reevaluate after the first project based on your value in future initiatives.

Expect business dealings to proceed quickly with less discussion or interaction than you are used to.

Don't expect Short-Term partners to be supportive of your needs based on your relationship; insert wording into contracts as needed.

They expect to make constant progress in discussions, and will interpret long waits as a lack of interest on your part, so try to keep things moving.

# INDIRECTNESS AND DIRECTNESS: EXPLICITNESS IN COMMUNICATION

## INDIRECT INTERACTING WITH DIRECT

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Goal: Convey your ideas and advance your agenda to people who may not understand your level of subtlety or nuance in communication.

Prepare for brief, factually-oriented encounters that place little emphasis on interpersonal relations.

Deliver information in a straightforward manner, using chronological order and lists, and stick to the main point as much as possible.

Try to speak up and ask questions during presentations. It's efficient and acceptable.

The goal of verbal interaction is to accomplish business goals, and opinions are stated directly to move the conversation forward. Being too subtle may confuse your counterparts.

People and their ideas are considered separate. Everyone has bad ideas, so criticism is normal for everyone. Don't take criticism of your ideas personally.

Reward and respect are gained by promoting one's ideas directly. Try to learn to do this.

If you're uncomfortable introducing your own idea in a meeting, ask a colleague to mention the idea for you.

Give negative feedback as directly as possible; polite agreement may be interpreted as a strong "yes", which will lead to problems later.

When direct feedback is requested, do your best to give your true opinion. Begin with praise if you need to, but state your criticisms clearly.

Direct speakers are explicit, so you don't need to look for subtle sub-texts, and doing so can lead to false conclusions. Assume people are being forthright.

There may be few opportunities outside of work to discuss matters that concern you with colleagues. You may need to discuss problems overtly.

Be aware that altering your behavior from what is normal (like not attending a social event) to indicate a problem will not be understood. Try to voice problems directly.

Cultivate friendships and convey problems privately to friends who will pass them along.

## DIRECT INTERACTING WITH INDIRECT

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Goal: Understand and communicate sensitively with people who give little feedback and may be offended by criticism of their ideas.

Prepare for lengthy, rambling interactions that are slow to get to the point.

Provide as much contextual information as possible, and use stories and examples to illustrate points.

Don't expect questions during presentations. Look for them offline afterwards.

Conversations are as much about saving face for all participants as they are about accomplishing business goals. Stating opinions too directly may cause offense.

Avoid negativity regarding others' statements and ideas. When it's unavoidable, begin responses with positive statements and mention negatives briefly and gently.

Reward and respect come from behaving respectfully towards others, even if your ideas are better than theirs. Avoid correcting others.

Introducing ideas in public causes embarrassment if others disagree. Test ideas casually on a colleague and introduce them indirectly.

Don't take "yes" for an answer. Pay attention to body language and tone of voice. Interpret vagueness, avoidance and humor as a "no".

When discussions stall or feedback is confusing, request a private meeting to get an honest, off-the-record explanation.

With indirect speakers, a great deal is said "between the lines". Learn to look for subtle cues and ask colleagues for context. Use social interaction to get the full story.

Alcohol is used in some indirect cultures to relieve social pressure and resolve disputes. Consider in participating in these bonding opportunities.

When someone does something out of character or different from habit, consider this a possible indication of problems in your relationship and inquire tactfully.

Cultivate friendships to gain information about problems that won't be shared in public.

## NEUTRAL AND EXPRESSIVE: ATTITUDES TOWARDS EXPRESSING EMOTION

### EXPRESIVE INTERACTING WITH NEUTRAL

**Goal:** Enjoy interaction while demonstrating the competence and rationality others rely on.

Restrict physical contact, especially during greetings. Allow counterparts to make the first "move" and follow their example.

Restrict your body language and tone of voice to avoid overwhelming counterparts.

Avoid interrupting, which may be perceived as impolite. Allow a pause after others speak.

Avoid showing anger or frustration, which can be perceived as unprofessional.

Avoid excessive praise or criticism to avoid overwhelming others.

Don't interpret a lack of expression as an indication of a lack of personality.

Don't interpret a lack of feedback as a lack of interest. The reactions may just not be expressed.

Digressions from an agenda may confuse counterparts. Try to stick to the agenda.

Follow talking points closely; long stories may confuse counterparts. If you do tell a story, explain how it relates to the subject under discussion.

Don't be insulted if your colleagues focus on work rather than personal relationships. Seek social opportunities through outlets outside of work.

Focus on demonstrating technical competence rather than developing personal relationships.

Avoid discussing personal matters at work, which can be perceived as unprofessional.

### NEUTRAL INTERACTING WITH EXPRESSIVE

**Goal:** Get the job done while demonstrating enthusiasm and sensitivity to others' feelings.

Physical contact indicates friendliness. Take it as a sign that things are going well.

Try to express interest through your voice, facial expression and gesture to convey engagement.

Recognize that interruption may be used to show engagement and move the discussion along.

Don't be intimidated by displays of annoyance or frustration; these may not indicate serious problems.

Provide both positive and negative feedback so others can adapt to what you are thinking.

Don't interpret "excessive" emotion as an indication of instability or frivolousness.

Don't interpret positive feedback as agreement. It may just be politeness.

Use digression from the agenda to understand their priorities and gather contextual information.

Illustrate points with stories to keep counterparts' interest. If they tell confusing stories, ask questions to confirm their meaning.

Accept social invitations to avoid causing offense and use the opportunity to get to know your counterparts.

Focus on developing personal relationships and be modest about your technical competence.

Allow others to engage you in social interaction at work to strengthen relationships.

## SCHEDULE AND FLOW: APPROACHES TO TIME MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

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### SCHEDULE INTERACTING WITH FLOW

**Goal: Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability while building relationships.**

Expect people to arrive somewhat late. Learn to estimate how long a wait you will have and plan to arrive when they do.

Plan to make phone calls or do other work while waiting for meetings to start.

Schedule meetings earlier than you want them to start. Be prepared for cancellations and have a backup plan for getting other things done.

Expect meetings to go overtime if a matter isn't concluded and avoid scheduling meetings too close together.

Recognize that multi-tasking during meetings (taking phone calls, checking e-mail, etc.) is normal and don't worry or take offense at this behavior.

Recognize that frequent schedule changes may be necessary to accommodate a fluid environment and do not mean final deadlines won't be met.

Recognize that last-minute changes are common and be prepared to be flexible. Sometimes they are for the better.

Build relationships so others will accommodate your need for greater stability.

Find ways to deal with a noisy or busy work environment without alienating others.

Explain your constraints and preferences and request help maintaining the order you need.

Show flexibility in dealing with spontaneity and social interaction at work to avoid seeming unfriendly.

Recognize the preference for face-to-face interaction and use it to gauge reactions and build relationships.

Take advantage of flow-oriented colleagues' flexibility to your advantage when you need extra time or are running late. They'll understand.

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### FLOW INTERACTING WITH SCHEDULE

**Goal: Demonstrate reliability and accountability while exercising your creative abilities.**

Recognize that people expect you to arrive on time and organize your schedule to do likewise.

Plan to get peripheral work done outside of meeting time so you can focus during meetings.

Don't set meeting times that you can't meet. If you must be late or miss an appointment, notify counterparts immediately.

Expect meetings to begin and end as scheduled; additional meetings will be added as needed to conclude business.

Focus on the agenda during meetings and avoid taking calls or other activities while meetings are in progress to convey competence and respect.

Recognize that schedule changes are considered disruptive and will be resisted. Attempt to meet intermediate as well as final deadlines.

Recognize that last-minute changes are perceived as disruptive, regardless of their value, and try to suggest new directions early on.

Demonstrate reliability so others will accommodate your need for flexibility.

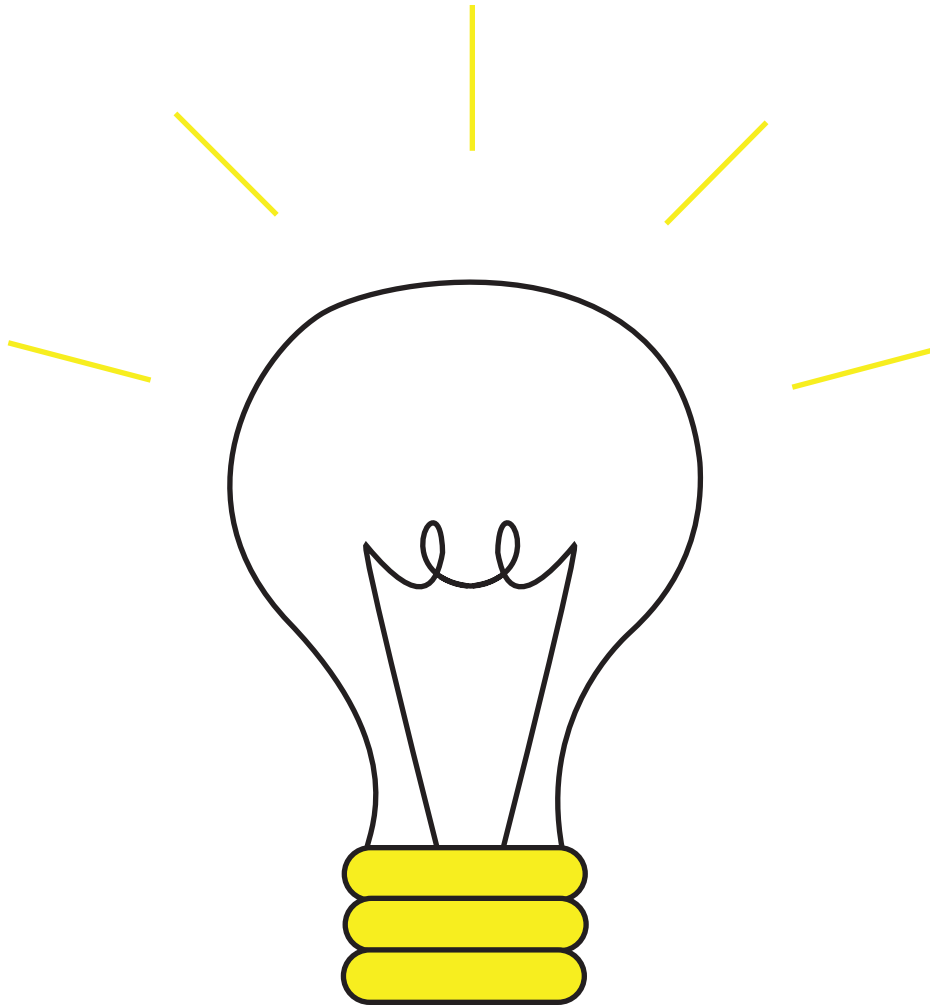
Don't take offense if others show a preference for working alone and resent interruption.

Explain your need for flexibility and request help gaining the freedom you need.

Limit social and spontaneous discussions at work, which may be considered unprofessional.

Recognize preference for indirect communication and save time by using phone calls or e-mail.

Call on schedule-oriented colleagues' efficiency when you have a stiff deadline to meet or a logical problem to solve.



LEARNING FROM "THEM"





## ACHIEVEMENT-ORIENTED

### What you can learn from Birthright-oriented counterparts:

- Birthright-oriented seniors are masters of a complex social system in which business deals are done on the basis of personal influence and relationships. They can teach you how to manage and leverage relationships effectively.
- If you are young, success in a birthright-oriented environment will be difficult without a mentor, no matter how talented you are. Mentoring relationships are common in Birthright environments, and can save you a great deal of frustration.
- If you are a senior Achiever, you can learn from the way your counterparts leverage their status as “elder statesman”, appearing gracious and courtly and always in control, to get good results in a Birthright environment.
- As a senior Achiever, you may find that birthright-oriented juniors can help you manage the system if you encourage them to take the initiative (not a natural role for them).
- Because relationships are so important in Birthright cultures, people with influence in partner companies or your own staff can be invaluable to you. Recognize their value and learn how to use their abilities.
- Birthright-oriented seniors who were born wealthy and influential have spent their lives in an environment of sophistication and culture. They can be fascinating and gracious colleagues, and can open doors for you throughout the world.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- In your culture, it’s vital to constantly provide value in order to be respected. You have been taught to be uncomfortable with the status quo, and if you seem to have too many “good ideas” it’s because you’re trying to improve things, not cause disruption.
- In your culture, achieving good results is more important than social adeptness, so people focus on the bottom line. You are committed to getting good results in your work together, but may be unaware of interpersonal considerations important to them.
- If you offend anyone, it’s due to lack of familiarity with their system rather than deliberate intent, and you are willing to learn if they will guide you.
- Things move quickly in Achievement cultures, and you are not accustomed to the slower pace of Ascriptive deal making. It would help you for them to explain how the system works so that you can understand what drives progress.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Birthright values of respect for seniority and influence. Achievers can be perceived as brash or isolationist, so be sensitive to the interpersonal dynamic around you. Learn who the players are, and frame ideas in terms of their benefit to everyone involved to avoid seeming self-serving. Advance your agenda by conveying its benefit to others. Enlist the support of people with influence. Demonstrate your commitment to the team and ask for support based on your personal relationships.

## BIRTHRIGHT-ORIENTED

### What you can learn from Achievement-oriented counterparts:

- Young people with expertise can have good ideas and the energy to follow up on them. Because they are raised to think independently, young people in Achievement cultures may be more creative and responsible than you expect.
- If you're young and birthright-oriented, exposure to achievers can help you learn to be more assertive and self-sufficient in moving towards your own goals. If you're senior and birthright-oriented, a mentoring relationship with an achiever combining their energy with your guidance can be very profitable.
- People in Achievement-oriented cultures strive continually to improve themselves and their lives, which makes them proactive and good at overcoming obstacles. They will employ this energy to move your agenda forward as long as they feel that their input is appreciated and their own goals being met.
- Achievement-oriented colleagues tend to test the limits of the system. They will help you look with fresh eyes at what is in place and see opportunities for improvement.
- Their system has flexibility that yours may not. In a partnership, you can leverage their capabilities when you want to make something happen.
- Because Achievers are used to flexibility and opportunity, they will quickly run into obstacles when working in your environment. You can win their friendship by teaching them how the system works and helping them acquire finesse and sophistication.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- For young birthright-oriented interactants: In your system, taking initiative without direction is disrespectful, and you may need more guidance than seniors provide.
- In your system, change is based on leveraging personal relationships, which requires time, finesse, and the right connections. Achievers may be frustrated by the time things take, but they can count on you to move things forward as appropriate.
- For birthright-oriented seniors: In your system, the relationship between juniors and seniors is one of mentor/mentee or master/apprentice. Juniors don't suggest changes aggressively or have great responsibility because they haven't mastered the complex system of relationships or acquired the influence necessary to implement transactions.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Achievement values of continuous improvement and progress. Achievers respond to arguments framed in terms of their desire to be rewarded for their work and move things forward. Explain to them how patience or forbearance will benefit them in the long run, while teaching them skills that will help them advance their agenda in your system. Avoid the appearance of favoritism and private deal making—explain how supporting relationships relate to business goals. Explain requests and directives in terms of the steps they include and clarify how the steps move things forward.

## UNIVERSALISTS

### What you can learn from Particularists:

- Rules can be arbitrary and can slow things down. Making exceptions isn’t as scary if you know the people you’re working with. Get to know them and cultivate people you can trust.
- Efficiency is a relative term. If your objectively efficient path alienates the people you will need to rely on in a human-oriented system, it isn’t really efficient.
- Particularists are flexible. They will work late in an emergency, excuse your difficulty meeting deadlines and do what needs to be done without complaining about schedules and rules.
- Because their environment is fluid, Particularists are expert troubleshooters and are skilled at working around obstacles. Look to them for solutions to your thorniest problems.
- Only when you understand the system of relationships and the interpersonal considerations that motivate actions and decisions in the Particularist environment will you begin to see how business is conducted.
- Cultivate interpersonal relationships with colleagues who can explain the context in which you’re operating and serve as intermediaries when problems occur. Ask questions and explain yourself as much as possible.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- You have human feelings like anyone else, but you’ve been schooled to make your own preferences and problems secondary to rules and principles, and trained to expect others to do the same.
- In your culture, private deal-making, special treatment for friends and ignoring rules for personal convenience are viewed negatively, and make you uncomfortable.
- The context you come from requires people to base decisions on rational arguments. Because of the stability of your environment, this approach has worked well for you, and it’s what you expect of others. You need to understand why things work differently in your new location.
- You come from a situation where rules and procedures offer security and stability so naturally, you’re reluctant to abandon them.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Particularist values, which include freedom of choice, allegiance to people rather than systems and the need to react to changing circumstances. Avoid framing problems in terms of Universalist values such as “those are the rules, why didn’t you follow them?” or “you agreed to this, so you have to keep your word”. “I have a problem—please help me with this” and “a situation has come up that I need help with” will work better for you, especially if you’ve invested the time to create personal relationships.

## PARTICULARISTS

### What you can learn from Universalists:

- Following a consistent set of rules and processes can make things go more smoothly and ensure consistency. Don't reject rules out of hand; consider their basis and give them a chance.
- Although they adhere to rules without question, Universalists are not robots. Take some time to get to know your counterparts. They are human, and may warm to your approach, given a chance.
- Universalists are rational and logical. They will treat you fairly, even as a stranger, rather than favor their friends and family, and won't waste your time with complaints about the system.
- Universalists are steady and dependable. Count on them to do what is expected of them every day, without making excuses.
- Most Universalists can be flexible. Once you explain the consequences of actions and decisions to Universalist colleagues, they may be willing to compromise their principles and rules.
- If you cultivate interpersonal relationships with colleagues, they can explain the context in which you're operating and serve as intermediaries when problems occur. Ask questions and explain yourself as much as possible.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- Making decisions in support of people you are responsible for is crucial in your culture, as it's the only way to maintain a network of support. Failing to support your family and friends would be perceived as ungrateful and inconsiderate—to them and to you, too.
- You believe that rules and policies have their use, but should be secondary to human concerns. If a rule isn't vitally important, you'd appreciate some flexibility.
- Having to choose between principles and people places you in a difficult position. Working things out so that people don't suffer may require compromises.
- In your context, you've had the right to expect decisions to take your feelings and preferences into consideration. Operating in an emotional vacuum makes you feel isolated.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Universalist values, which include respect for stability for the majority, keeping one's word and the need for order. Avoid framing problems in terms of Particularist values such as "things have changed so the plan is now irrelevant" or "the boss's grandson wants to come along, so we'll have to move the meeting". Try: "I respect our plan, and will work to keep as much of it intact in the face of recent changes" and "The most efficient way to move forward is to take time to deal with an interpersonal relationship we rely on". This will work if you're perceived as being organized and trustworthy.

## RELATIONSHIP

### What you can learn from Task-oriented counterparts:

- The Task-oriented approach to interaction is efficient in terms of time. Clear and explicit communication helps move an agenda forward. The logical approach saves time and produces measurable results. Take advantage of their ability to execute.
- Task-oriented counterparts are generally stable and reliable. When you need to get something done, you can count on them to deliver.
- Task-oriented counterparts are good at getting to the bottom of an idea or opportunity on rational grounds. Take advantage of this ability when for complex problems.
- Although a lack of social interaction at work may make you feel isolated, the focus on getting the job done results in more leisure time. Cultivate relationships outside of work and enjoy the extra time off.
- Task-oriented counterparts tend to have multiple casual relationships based on activities they participate in. You can make friends by joining clubs or organizations and enjoy knowing a variety of people without being entangled in their problems.
- The direct communication you receive may seem blunt and insensitive, but if you learn not to take it personally, it can enhance your achievement and reward. Knowing where you stand and how you could improve can save a lot of time.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- In the environment you come from, enforcement of contracts is not always possible. Business success depends heavily on one’s personal network. Doing business with strangers is risky, and it’s uncomfortable for you.
- In your cultural context, success depends on developing and managing complex relationships in a shifting environment. Success is achieved only when everyone concerned benefits, so opportunity is not as clear cut as it may seem.
- Corporate relationships are considered to be similar to marriage, as opposed to a series of “flings”, with each side compromising throughout the life of the relationship. Trust is vital to this approach, which slows the development of partnerships. Once a relationship is in place, though, you work hard to support your partners.
- You are accustomed to a close personal working relationship with colleagues and numerous lifelong friendships, and would appreciate recommendations for making friends in the emotionally discrete Task-oriented environment.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Task values, which include direct communication and rational arguments. Task-oriented counterparts will respond to the “logic” of relationships once they understand the dynamics. Avoid the appearance of a private agenda and personal favoritism. Frame activities that support relationships in terms of their contribution to business goals. If they cannot be easily justified in these terms (e.g. hiring relatives of business partners), explain how your system works and why it’s appropriate in the long term to support relationships in this way.

## TASK

### What you can learn from Relationship counterparts:

- In a Relationship system, business colleagues tend to know one another well. They know each other's background, family history, place of education, social networks, etc. Count on them to help you understand the people you're dealing with and what motivates them.
- Relationship-oriented businesspeople are generally skilled at assessing the suitability of a potential partner. They know which questions to ask and how to interpret responses. In a Relationship system, it's difficult to hide a bad reputation, and your Relationship colleagues can help you determine whom to trust.
- Relationship systems require flexibility in partnerships to maintain relationships that work for both parties. Their members are good at problem solving, compromise, and working out accommodations.
- Relationship colleagues can mentor you in developing the personal connections you need to do successful business. Watch their interaction with new associates.
- Because social activities are so important to business dealings, Relationship-oriented partners (especially those from Individualist cultures) can be excellent guides in their own environment and will want to engage with you socially. Take advantage of their openness, enjoy the interaction and learn how their system works.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- In your system, business opportunity and contractual enforcement are the basis of business dealings. You are accustomed to identifying opportunity, creating relationships based on legal agreements and proceeding as indicated in agreements. You're not used to the lengthy Relationship "getting-to-know-you" period. It may be perceived by your company as frivolous and causing unnecessary delay and expense.
- You don't mean to be isolationist, but "mixing business with pleasure" seems risky, and you aren't in the habit of associating with colleagues so frequently away from the office. You may need some time alone.
- Because of your Task orientation, you have not learned to look for subtle cues and context in conversation, but you would like to learn those skills. It would be helpful to you if you could debrief a colleague after meetings to understand subtleties you might have missed.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Relationship values, which include relationship building and an indirect approach to business discussions. Avoid seeming self-serving and excessively bottom-line oriented by not rushing business, and reassure Relationship counterparts that you are committed to taking the time necessary to develop a long-term relationship. Frame requests in terms of a win-win orientation that supports long-term goals for your relationship and takes the human component into consideration.

## INDIVIDUALIST

### What you can learn from Collectivists:

- Collectivists are skilled consensus-builders. They are good at eliciting feedback from people who are reluctant to contribute, and will consider the interests of all concerned when making a decision.
- Collectivists are very good at organizing a group effort (especially with other Collectivists), maximizing the skills of all members of a team and executing efficiently. They are good at “reading” others and addressing problems before they surface as conflict. Consult them in cases of internal conflict.
- They are loyal team members and will sacrifice their own preferences for the good of the group, the project and the company. Count on them to do what is necessary.
- Collectivists are careful to protect the reputation of their team and company. They are unlikely to betray privileged information. They are cautious about advancing half-formed ideas, and are likely to speak only after giving a matter thorough consideration.
- They maintain tight communication with one another, and make sure everyone is “on the same page”, preventing team members from providing conflicting information. They present an organized, cohesive face to outsiders.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- In your system, reward is based on individual achievement, so individuals must make their ideas and accomplishments known to others. You don’t mean to be egotistical, but you have been trained to present your own ideas directly and assertively. You would appreciate knowing when you step over the line regarding good form.
- In your system, decision makers come to decisions quickly, and you are not familiar with the consensus-building approach, which is time-consuming in comparison. You may need help explaining to your management why things are taking so long.
- Brainstorming is a common approach to problem solving in your culture, and advancing partially-formed ideas is considered an appropriate way to develop solutions. This doesn’t mean you can’t tell the difference between a preliminary plan and a final one.
- An Individualist focus doesn’t necessarily imply selfishness; taking individual responsibility on behalf of others is part of your system. But you have not been trained to be as attuned to others as Collectivist colleagues, so they will need to guide you in understanding the group dynamic. Once you understand it, you will respect it.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Collectivist values, which include putting the group first, protecting it and making sacrifices on behalf of colleagues. Present ideas after you’ve had time to think them through carefully and vet them through a colleague. Focus on team relations rather than individual achievement. Having a senior or team member present your ideas will not prevent you from receiving recognition as a top performer; it will improve your reputation as a team player and enhance the likelihood that your ideas will be adopted.



## COLLECTIVIST

### What you can learn from Individualists:

- Individualists are good at making bold decisions and advancing business goals quickly. If they make a mistake, they change direction quickly to compensate. A strong decision maker can implement good ideas in their purest form because they are not modified in consultation with others. You can count on them when quick and decisive action is called for.
- Because they are independent thinkers, Individualists are good at “thinking outside the box” and coming up with creative solutions. Consult them when radical change or new ideas are in order.
- Individualists tend to be direct and truthful about their opinions when asked. They can be relied on to “get to the bottom line” and pinpoint structural problems because interpersonal relationships and dynamics do not obscure these in their minds.
- Individualists will speculate and guess when asked a question they’re not sure of. Their readiness to share intuition can be useful as long as you distinguish it from informed opinion or company policy.
- Individualist managers are good at identifying strengths in their team members and supporting the development of talent, allowing employees to realize their full potential and capitalize on their abilities. Capable employees are rewarded sooner on the basis of their performance and contribution.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- You have been trained to subordinate your own opinions to those of the group, and are not accustomed to taking individual initiative on your own ideas. You may need guidance and encouragement from others in voicing suggestions and following up on them at first.
- Your background has taught you to reserve ideas until they were fully formed. You have little experience with Individualist-style brainstorming. This does not mean you don’t have good ideas—it just means you will be cautious about expressing them.
- You are unlikely to be a major contributor to group meetings at first; the Individualist style of throwing out ideas is a bit overwhelming. But you will respond when asked for your ideas if others will be patient and give you time to respond, and your ideas will be well thought out.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Individualist values, which include assertive decisiveness and bold action. Excessively tentative suggestions may be perceived as indications that you don’t believe in them, so state them as directly as possible. Be prepared to argue assertively if they are challenged and to take action to implement them if they are accepted. If you’re uncomfortable doing this verbally, provide written documentation so you don’t have to talk as much.



## SHORT-TERM

### What you can learn from Long-Term-oriented colleagues:

- In Long-Term cultures, actions are considered in terms of every possible consequence. Long-term thinkers are good at assessing potential ramifications of decisions and any suggestion they make will have been considered from multiple angles. Take advantage of this feature when considering a bold new direction or initiative.
- Count on Long-Term colleagues to be analytical about decisions and not to allow enthusiasm to cloud their reason. Pair employees with poor judgment with Long-Term thinkers to help them grow and produce stronger recommendations.
- Your Long-Term-oriented colleagues place great value on reputation and relationships. They will do what it takes to satisfy colleagues, partners and customers.
- Because they tend to regard new ideas as potential minefields, Long-Term thinkers are good at recognizing and dealing with complexity. They excel at deconstruction and analysis of complex issues.
- Because Long-Term cultures place emphasis on relationships, their members make dedicated partners, colleagues and employees. Recognize that the stronger the relationship you have, the more you can count on them to be loyal and reliable, and cultivate strong bonds.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- In your system, each generation is seen as bringing new conditions. Reputations are based on recent performance, and even a venerable company loses prestige if it does not perform well in the current environment. You are trained to facilitate performance in the present, and to value it more highly than maintaining tradition. Your colleagues can count on you to recognize opportunity and propose creative ideas, and you will look to them for guidance regarding negative implications those might have in their system.
- Your company is not accustomed to the lengthy and cautious decision-making process of Long-Term companies. Your management may take this as a sign of a lack of commitment to the partnership. You need to be able to document progress in your negotiations in order to keep the discussions alive.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Long-Term values, which include maintaining tradition and recapturing past success. Frame new ideas in terms of their long-term prospects and the opportunity to build on them in the future; emphasize any long-term goals that will be served by current project. Research past initiatives of Long-Term partners and frame your proposals as a way to recapture past success.

## LONG-TERM

### What you can learn from Short-Term-oriented colleagues:

- Short-Term-oriented cultures direct energy towards innovation and adaptation. Your Short-Term colleagues are always looking for new opportunity. They are adventurous and tend to be risk takers. Look to them to identify new directions and propose creative alternatives to your current strategy.
- Short-Term thinkers tend to be flexible, and are good at changing direction when new opportunities or problems arise. They can mobilize multiple business divisions quickly to be responsive. Count on Short-Term partners when conditions change.
- They tend to become uncomfortable with the status quo, even when it is working well at the moment. They direct their analytical skills to the future, and are good at anticipating challenges before they arise.
- Short-Term partners and colleagues can be useful when new direction is needed but not forthcoming from Long-Term leadership. Find ways to introduce their creative energy into a stagnant situation.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- In the environment you come from, reputation is based on long tradition rather than recent accomplishment. Rapid change in direction is perceived as capricious and dangerous. Your colleagues can count on you to be steady and reliable, and you will look to them for guidance regarding opportunities for innovation.
- You have been taught to analyze new ideas thoroughly and identify potential advantages and disadvantages relative to complex systems. You can be trusted to think through any action before you recommend it, challenge reckless ideas and support new initiatives with your analytical skills.
- Your partners and customers have a Long-Term orientation as well, and if they dislike a new direction you adopt, your reputation could be compromised for a very long time. There are serious consequences in your system for rash decisions.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Short-Term values, which include seizing opportunity and realizing value in the present and future. Short-Term partners will not understand the issues that motivate your decision making; explain your process in terms of the factors you are taking into consideration and the benefits of Long-Term thinking to your partner. Help them understand your need for longstanding relationships and the benefits to them of an enduring partnership.

## INDIRECT

### What you can learn from Direct counterparts:

- Direct communication is clear and efficient. Meetings are brief and productive. New ideas are introduced in public, and problems are resolved at the table, without requiring separate discussions with multiple players.
- If you’re operating in a Direct system, you don’t have to worry about determining others’ feelings or trying to intuit what they are thinking—they will tell you. Although this may seem confrontational and a bit brutal at times, it enables people to “clear the air” and move on without misunderstanding or grudges.
- In a Direct environment, people understand what others want from them and how they feel about their ideas and suggestions, so business can move forward rapidly. If you don’t understand something, you may simply ask about it. Although this may feel uncomfortable, the mechanics of Direct communication are much simpler than Indirect interaction.
- Your Direct colleagues will not hesitate to express their own ideas or criticize those of others. Count on them to say what needs to be said quickly and effectively.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- In your system, proposing your own ideas directly in public is considered inappropriate, as others may have to figure out how to point out its flaws without causing you to lose face. It doesn’t come naturally to you to make suggestions directly, but you will provide your opinion if asked, and will do your best to contribute directly.
- You are not accustomed to criticizing others’ ideas openly, but will work to be as clear as possible when giving feedback so they will know where they stand. If they sense reticence on your part, they should ask you what you are thinking in a private context.
- Note: Your polite positive feedback might occasionally lead others to believe you support an idea and will move forward on it. If so, you will need to convey that not moving forward is not an indication of dishonesty on your part; it means that you sent signals they did not understand, while trying not to embarrass them. Explain that you were behaving according to rules of politeness you have learned, and will try to be more direct in the future.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be consistent with Direct strategies, which include the public introduction of ideas and honest expression of opinions and reactions. To advance a proposal, state it explicitly and be prepared to defend it if it is challenged. Make sure you express disagreement to someone, at least privately, who will represent you if you cannot speak up publicly. To be rewarded for your work, promote your ideas directly to managers.

## DIRECT

### What you can learn from Indirect counterparts:

- Indirect speakers function in an environment where conflict in interaction is considered unnerving and disruptive. They are skilled at saying things tactfully and avoiding offense. Count on them to navigate complicated social situations without overt drama and disruption, polling those concerned before making public recommendations.
- Your indirect colleagues are masters of nuance and intuition, which makes them uniquely able to read and respond to problems before they become serious. Observing their interaction with one another will teach you to recognize covert signals and deal with conflict indirectly.
- Working in an indirect environment is usually without drama on the surface. People don't impose their problems on one another or create public disturbances. People will be polite to you and to one another (although you must watch more carefully for undercurrents of disapproval and conflict).
- Indirect communication is like a choreographed dance, and skill at it is considered a sign of sophistication. The aesthetic component of Indirect business interaction can be fascinating, and learning it will help you to think more strategically about building business relationships.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- In your system, people voice their opinions and ideas openly, and others respond to them equally openly. The concept of causing someone to “lose face” through criticism of their ideas is not a concern, because people's ideas are considered separate from themselves. Your tendency to speak bluntly about your own ideas and those of others is not intended to cause offense; it is just a result of your training, and you would appreciate it if they would let you know if your style of communicating creates problems.
- In your system, “yes” and “no” can be taken at face value. People do not respond in a positive manner just to be polite. So you will probably miss nuances in others' communication. You will look to them for guidance in interpreting the signals you're receiving, and you would appreciate directness from them whenever possible.
- You realize that in an indirect system, communication with colleagues, customers and partners can require delicacy that you have not mastered. You would appreciate their help in learning how to interact effectively with others.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be consistent with Indirect strategies, which include testing ideas with a friend or colleague before mentioning them in public. Try to respond positively to others' input, and then convey any concerns through an intermediary or in a private social context. Avoid insisting or pressing a point; when you encounter even slight resistance, withdraw the suggestion. Ask a colleague in private to help you piece together what went wrong.

## NEUTRAL

### What you can learn from Expressives:

- Expressives are easy to read. Their opinions are clear, and when disagreements arise, they can be addressed before they escalate.
- Expressives can be a lot of fun. They tend to be uninhibited about telling jokes, illustrating these with facial expression and body language, and enjoy recreation to the fullest. They are often the “life of the party” at social events.
- They will engage with you quickly and help you establish a network, inviting you to social events as a natural aspect of your work together.
- Expressive colleagues embrace interpersonal complexity. They engage deeply with others, and form deep and passionate relationships. They describe their own problems readily and are sympathetic to those of others. They can become an attractant for visitors and enhance the cohesiveness of a company or work group.
- Some Expressives like to argue, always seeming to bicker with one another. This can be like a game, and if you are willing to engage, you can make friends this way.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- In the environment you come from, it’s inappropriate to display excessive emotion. You have been taught to keep your feelings largely to yourself and not to inconvenience others with your problems. You don’t mean to be stand-offish—you just don’t express yourself with as much enthusiasm as they do.
- Because you have been taught to control your emotion and behave calmly, your colleagues can count on you to think rationally in difficult situations. You will not sidetrack a meeting or project with outbursts or arguments, and can be trusted to accomplish your duties steadily and reliably.
- A lack of display on your part should not be interpreted as a lack of interest. You would like to get to know your colleagues better, and look forward to experiencing life the way they do.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be consistent with Expressive strategies, which include appeals to human values and emotions such as friendship, and should be conveyed with emphasis. In dealing with Expressive counterparts, you have access to both their heads and their hearts. Because framing a point in a neutral manner makes it seem unimportant and unexciting, others are unlikely to engage with an idea unless you “sell” it. Introduce ideas with enthusiasm, and defend them with vehemence.

## EXPRESSIVE

### What you can learn from Neutrals:

- Neutrals are good at self-control, so they will not bring their personal problems to work or cause distractions with angry or emotional outbursts. You can count on them to focus on work when they are at work.
- Because they tend to focus on the task at hand rather than their feelings, Neutrals approach business issues from a rational point of view, and are good at analyzing opportunities, projects and tasks in an organized manner.
- Neutrals create a calm work environment, in which people know what to expect of one another. Given less drama at work, you will be free to focus on assignments while you're there and expend more energy on social activities outside the office.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- In the environment you come from, people freely express their feelings to one another in a work context. You don't mean to be dramatic, but if you feel something strongly, you are likely to express it.
- The way you express disagreement may seem to indicate anger, but it's really just a manifestation of the passion you feel for your work, and people don't need to be concerned that you are out of control.
- If your behavior seems loud or unprofessional given workplace constraints, you would appreciate knowing this. You will do your best to manage this, and your colleagues can count on you to be a sympathetic listener and engaged coworker.
- You are good at enjoyment, and are used to having a lively social network of close friends. You would enjoy introducing your colleagues to a new dimension of fun and camaraderie.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be consistent with Neutral strategies, which include a calm demeanor and rational presentation of information. Displays of emotion during arguments may cause you to appear irrational or excessively attached to an idea. Laughing and joking during work may seem unprofessional to your colleagues, so maintain a calm demeanor at work and save social interaction for after-hours. Once back in the office, resume a calm appearance, no matter how energetic things were during social time.

## SCHEDULE

### What you can learn from flow-oriented counterparts:

- Because conditions fluctuate constantly in the Flow context, your flow-oriented colleagues will be good at dealing with surprises and changing direction quickly as needed. They will not be flustered by changes in schedule or last-minute surprises. You may find they take in stride the need to drop everything to handle an emergency or work unusual hours to get things done.
- Flow-oriented colleagues are good at juggling multiple agendas at once. When one project stalls, they are quick to change gears and address another. They are good at using any free time that presents itself constructively. Rather than sit and wait for meetings to start, they make calls or check e-mail. This enables them to take advantage of the gaps that turn up in a Flow environment.
- Your flow-oriented colleagues will be relaxed, take-it-in stride people who have an easygoing attitude towards time and progress. Once you learn to relax as well, you can enjoy the ebb and flow of quiet and busy times.
- People in Flow cultures are famous for being “in the moment” and knowing how to enjoy life. Hard work during crunch times will be rewarded by opportunities for fun and cultural learning when conditions permit.

### What you should explain about yourself:

- In the environment you come from, people are expected to produce continuously and consistently. You recognize the need for flexibility in an unpredictable environment, but you (or your management) will expect deadlines to be met, and you will appreciate it if they will keep you up-to-date on changes to project timelines.
- Although you are still learning to function in a Flow context, your colleagues can count on you to approach your work in an organized fashion and be accountable for meeting all your commitments to them.
- You are used to focusing intently on the task at hand in a relatively predictable work environment, and if you withdraw to concentrate, it is not to be unfriendly, but to make sure you deliver the best effort possible.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Flow values, which include creativity, problem solving and flexibility. Frame suggestions in terms of how they will contribute to these goals. Since sticking to a rigid agenda or plan will be perceived as inflexibility, make an effort to accommodate change, and if you have a reputation for flexibility, your suggestions will carry greater weight. Don’t hesitate to voice creative ideas even at the last minute—they may be readily accommodated and appreciated.

## FLOW

### What you can learn from Schedule-oriented counterparts:

- Because conditions are relatively stable and predictable in the Schedule environment, your schedule-oriented colleagues will approach their work in a linear manner. They will make detailed project plans and do their best to stick to them. There will be few surprises from schedule-oriented partners during a project, and they will do their best to meet the deadlines you agree on, providing advance notice if conditions change.
- Schedule-oriented colleagues are reliable at a personal level as well, and will take promises they make you seriously. You will not have to check in repeatedly to make sure appointments are still “on” or adjust to last-minute notice of changes.
- The schedule-oriented work environment is relatively predictable. Meetings will begin and end on time, and projects will generally move forward as planned. You will have fewer changes to respond to, and will be able to stick to your own plans and schedules. This will give you more freedom to focus on tasks and time to devote to leisure activities.

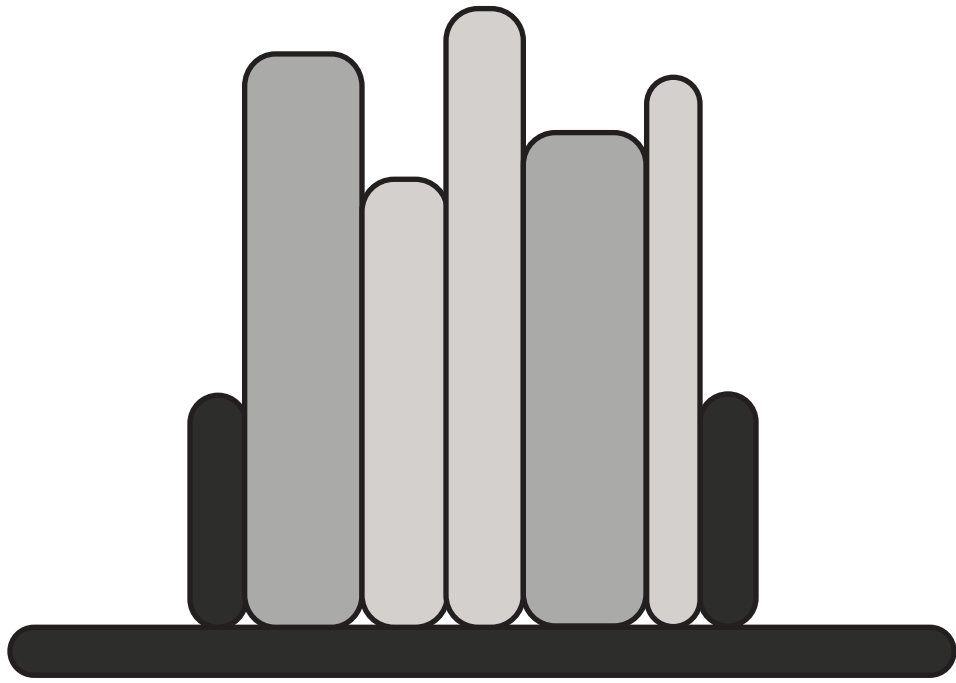
### What you should explain about yourself:

- In the environment I come from, conditions fluctuate constantly, and detailed plans and schedules aren’t useful because they would have to be updated continually. Scheduling things too far in advance just results in last minute changes. I will do my best to keep others informed of developments as they occur and explain what is confirmed and what is still evolving on my side.
- I’ve been trained to take advantage of every opportunity to get work done in a shifting environment. Trying to keep things moving forward while I’m in meetings doesn’t imply disrespect to other meeting participants; it means I’m working to fulfill my responsibility to multiple projects at once.
- In the system I come from, ending a meeting before business is concluded seems a waste, so we extend meetings as needed to finish. This means our next meeting may begin late, and it’s understood that meeting start times need to be flexible as a result. I’ll attempt to be punctual for meetings you schedule, and you can count on me not end meetings with you until we have had time to conclude our business.

### Making a persuasive argument:

Arguments should be made in terms of Schedule values, which include a focus on planning and sticking to agendas. Frame requests in terms of how they will help keep projects on track and meet deadlines. Always alert schedule-oriented colleagues of changes in plan as early as possible; if they have time to reschedule, they will experience less disruption. If you develop a reputation for reliability, requests for greater flexibility will be taken seriously, particularly if you frame them in terms of problem solving for the good of the project.





SUGGESTED READINGS



## INTRODUCTORY READINGS

**The Silent Language**, Edward T. Hall. Anchor Books, 1959.

Hall's books are the foundation of the relevant branch of cultural analysis. This one introduces the thinking behind the development of cultural dimensions.

**Beyond Culture**, Edward T. Hall. Anchor Books, 1976.

An elaboration and further development of a model of culture.

**Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business**,

Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner. McGraw-Hill, 1998.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner provide in-depth description of most of the features used in the materials as well as information on the cultural profiles of particular countries that can add to your understanding of the environment you have analyzed.

**Figuring Foreigners Out: A Practical Guide**, Craig Storti, Intercultural Press, 1999.

Storti offers practical recommendations as well as exercises for assessing behavior you encounter according to cultural parameters similar to the ones in these materials.

**When Cultures Collide: Leading Across Cultures**, Richard D. Lewis. Nicolas Brealey Publishing, 2006.

Lewis's elegant model provides additional detail regarding certain dimensions. It addresses some problems with previous models, if you have the time and energy for such a long book.

