CULTURAL ANALYSIS TOOL KIT FOR EXECUTIVES
Today’s Global Executives Must Be Prepared to

- Assess new business destinations effectively
- Understand the prevailing cultural context quickly
  - People’s goals, motivations and expectations
  - Structures and systems that shape business
- Implement in a culturally appropriate manner
Cultural Factors Affect People’s Performance and Expectation

- Interactive Style
- Organization and Time Management
- Personal Initiative and Respect for Authority
- Responsibility and Accountability
- Promotion and Compensation
Cultural Analysis Toolkit

Helps you analyze a destination so you can:

• Understand your own culturally-based attitudes, preferences and behaviors

• Analyze a new cultural environment

• Anticipate and solve problems
What is Culture?

A **system** of values and norms that are **shared** among a group of people and that when taken together **constitute a design for living.**
Cultural Frameworks

- Analyze Culture
- Make Sense of Differences
- Posit Parameters
The Cultural Framework in the Toolkit

- Based on the work of scholars in cross-cultural business communication
- Adapted for ease of use
- Features 8 cultural dimensions
  - These are described in the *Attitudes and Behaviors* section of the Toolkit
1. Achievement/Birthright

Attitudes Towards Status

Success through Performance

Success through Influence
2. Universalism/Particularism

Attitudes Towards Authority

Follow Most Rules to Ensure Stability

Choose When to Follow Rules
3. Relationship/Task

Attitudes Towards Accomplishing Goals

Rely on Relationships

Rely on Structures/Processes
4. Individualism/Collectivism

Attitudes Towards Collaboration and Reward

Individual Accountability and Reward

Group Accountability and Reward
5. Short-Term/Long-Term

Attitudes Towards Time

Prioritize the Future, Innovation

Prioritize Consistency with the Past
6. Indirectness/Directness

Attitudes Towards Explicitness in Communication

Avoid Confrontation to Preserve Relationships

Get to the Point to Advance Agenda
7. Expressive/Neutral

How Much Emotion is Conveyed

Emotions Conveyed Clearly
Emotions Held in Check
8. Schedule/Flow

How Time is Perceived and Organized

Plan and Schedule to Avoid Surprises

Multitask and Adapt for Flexibility
Assess your new environment by:

- Observing
- Company visits/Meetings
- Reading
- Casual interaction
Using the Cultural Toolkit

**Step 1**
Take Self-Evaluation

**Step 2**
Conduct Investigation

**Step 3**
Review Attitudes and Behaviors
Review Reactions and Interpretations
Review Coping with Difference

**Step 4**
Review Learning from “Them”
Cultural Intelligence

Problem Solving Ability
Exercise 1: Self-Assessment

Answer the self-assessment questions in the *Behaviors and Attitudes* section of the toolkit and create your Personal Profile on p. 34.
Exercise 2: Review an Example

To get a sense of what to look for as you conduct your own analysis of a new location, review the S. Korea example of a cultural analysis.
Exercise 3: Using the Toolkit

Reassessing Rio

Read the scenario on the next slide and answer the questions that follow it using the toolkit as indicated.
Exercise Scenario: Reassessing Rio

Christine Williams wonders whether taking an assignment Rio de Janeiro was a good idea after all. Things seem disorganized in her company’s Brazilian office, and she’s concerned about being able to get the job done in this environment.

Although she appreciates the friendliness of the people she’s met, time has little meaning in Rio as far as Christine can tell. When her colleague, Raphaela, invited her out dancing with her friends, they agreed to meet at 8pm, but it was 10pm before everyone showed up, with no apologies for being late, and Christine dragged in to work the next day. This sort of thing seems typical, so when she met Raphaela for coffee last week, Christine was sure to let her know she only had an hour before her next meeting. Raphaela was still 20 minutes late, and took time to finish a phone call before she sat down. Christine felt slighted, and she wonders how seriously Raphaela takes their friendship.

And her team project is a nightmare. Her team members turn in the work they’re supposed to do at random times, and the project has stalled twice while they waited for someone’s contribution. Christine was terrified that they’d miss an important milestone, but Paolo, one of the worst offenders, stayed up all night and got it done. She has to admit he did a good job, which is confusing, since she had concluded that he was either lazy or incompetent. There’s no rhyme or reason here, and she can’t seem to get her footing. Brazilians seem alternately friendly and inconsiderate, lazy, and productive… What is going on?
Scenario Analysis

Use the sections of the Toolkit indicated below to answer these questions:

1. **Gathering Data**: What cultural feature is responsible for Christine’s confusion?

2. **Reactions and Interpretations**: How do Christine’s Brazilian counterparts probably feel about her behavior and expectations?

3. **Coping with Differences**: What might Christine do to lessen her frustration and cultivate smooth relationships with Brazilians?

4. **Learning from Them**:
   - How might Christine explain her own cultural bias?
   - What strategies might she use to get her needs met?
   - What Brazilian traits could she benefit from?
Exercise 4

Using the **Universalists** part of the *Learning from “Them”* section (p. 79), consider this scenario:

You are a Universalist. You have a strict deadline for a project, and you’re concerned that your Particularist employees will miss the deadline, because it’s somewhat arbitrary and not urgent. Also, several things have come up since the schedule was originally made, and you’re concerned that the date will slip. You’d like to point out that they agreed to the deadline, and that it’s their obligation to keep their word, but they don’t seem to care about this or take schedules that seriously. How can you frame your problem in terms that are meaningful to them?
Exercise 4: Possible Responses

Based on Particularist values of flexibility, understanding before choosing, and emphasis on the personal network, you might try the following:

• “Here’s why this deadline is important to our group...”

• “I have a problem – I would really appreciate your help.”

• “A situation has come up that I can’t manage myself. I’d appreciate your advice.”

• “Would you be willing to help me convince others to get this done?”
Exercise 5: Advanced Cultural Analysis

View the *Memo of Understanding* video and follow the steps to analyze a virtual business interaction.
You’ve Used the Toolkit to:

• Understand your own orientation (Exercise 1)
• Review a sample cultural analysis (Exercise 2)
• Identify cultural features/analyze conflict (Exercise 3)
• Persuade others based on their cultural profiles (Exercise 4)
• Conduct sophisticated analysis/ problem-solve in virtual business scenarios (Exercise 5)
Once You’ve Internalized the Cultural Features, You’ll be Ready to:

• Analyze your next travel destination
• Recognize cultural features in action
• Predict and solve problems in a culturally-appropriate manner
For more information about the Cultural Analysis Toolkit for Executives, contact

Deirdre.Mendez@McCombs.utexas.edu