Cross-cultural communication and negotiations

Dr Ilona Hunek
What is the similarity between the object in front of you and culture?
What insight does that give you about how to work effectively across cultures?
Layers of culture

- Onion:
  - Like an onion, people are shaped by many layers of culture.
Layers of culture: how it works

Hidden assumptions

Values

Norms

Attitudes

Behaviours
Layers of culture

Iceberg:

The deeper the element of a culture’s iceberg you experience, the harder it is to adapt or shift.
Fish can’t see water

Fish in water:

Like water to a fish, the influence of our own culture is often invisible to us.
Mental programming

• Software:

• Culture is the collective programing of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category from another’ (Hofstede, 1991: 5).
National culture as mental programming

- National culture is just a part of mental programming.
Hi Kamila,

The community fund is not to support office wide initiatives, as such, it is aimed at individual employees who want to support a charity outside of work. The larger scale projects come under ‘CSR’ which unfortunately has not yet been formally structured at XXX. We do not want to enter into any long term relationships with companies until we have an agreed global strategy for this kind of thing. At this point however, there is nowhere else your request can fit, so we are happy to deal with it under the community fund this time. We may agree to fund the first session or possibly first two sessions with the below request, this is to be decided.

Please could you give me some more detail on what the £11,000 goes towards? How many sessions, is there a donation, what is involved, how many people can take part, etc?

Thanks,
Areas of cross-cultural misunderstandings

Values
- Core beliefs
- Attitudes and worldviews

Communication patterns
- Speech styles
- Listening habits

Concept of time

Concept of space
Cultural categories
R.D. Lewis

Linear – active
• Fact-oriented, cold, planning, direct

Multi – active
• People-oriented, warm, emotional, expressive

Reactive
• Relationship-oriented, friendly, polite, accommodating, compromise-seeking
# Lewis’ Model: Cultural Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LINEAR-ACTIVE</th>
<th>MULTI-ACTIVE</th>
<th>REACTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talks half the time</td>
<td>Talks most of the time</td>
<td>Listens most of the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does one thing at a time</td>
<td>Does several things at once</td>
<td>Reacts to partner’s action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans ahead step by step</td>
<td>Plans grand outline only</td>
<td>Looks at general principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partly conceals feelings</td>
<td>Displays feelings</td>
<td>Conceals feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confronts with logic</td>
<td>Confronts emotionally</td>
<td>Never confronts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislikes losing face</td>
<td>Has good excuses</td>
<td>Must not lose face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely interrupts</td>
<td>Often interrupts</td>
<td>Doesn’t interrupt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job-oriented</td>
<td>People-oriented</td>
<td>Very people-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses mainly facts</td>
<td>Feelings before facts</td>
<td>Statements are promises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truth before diplomacy</td>
<td>Flexible truth</td>
<td>Diplomacy over truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes impatient</td>
<td>Impatient</td>
<td>Patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited body language</td>
<td>Unlimited body language</td>
<td>Subtle body language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respects officialdom</td>
<td>Seeks out key person</td>
<td>Uses connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separates the social and professional</td>
<td>Interweaves the social and professional</td>
<td>Connects the social and professional</td>
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</table>
Level of difficulty in LMR interactions
Linear-active – Reactive Horizons

Concepts & Values outside Linear-active and Reactive ken

- forceful
- declares one's position
- result-oriented
- truth before diplomacy
- facts before feelings
- individualist
- job-oriented
- works long hours
- makes quick decisions
- confronts with logic
- own career first
- direct

- accommodating
- reacts to other's position
- reputation, market share oriented
- diplomacy before truth
- must not lose face
- collectivist
- people-oriented
- flexible hours
- decisions by consensus (slow)
- avoids confrontation
- group interest first
- indirect

punctuality
non-tactile
patient
plans ahead
limits talkativeness
enjoys losing face
limited body language
does one thing at a time
enjoys rhetoric or overt emotion
relies on general reliability
calm

Introvert
plans ahead
limits talkativeness
enjoys losing face
limited body language
does one thing at a time
enjoys rhetoric or overt emotion
relies on general reliability
calm
Multi-active – Reactive Horizons

- Concepts & Values
  - outside Multi-active and
  - Reactive ken

  - talkative
  - poor listener
  - unrestricted body language
  - truth is negotiable
  - surface emotion
  - rarely loses face
  - inquisitive
  - extrovert
  - interrupts frequently
  - introduces many ideas
  - unpunctual
  - thinks aloud

  - works long days
  - changes or modifies plans
  - formality
  - goes round all departments
  - pulls strings
  - seeks favours
  - contracts are re-negotiable
  - connects social and professional
  - protocol important
  - people oriented
  - power distance considerable
  - delicacy of approach (tactful, diplomatic)
  - strong sense of history
  - religion important

- reactive ken

  - reticent
  - good listener
  - subtle body language
  - no absolute truth
  - emotion under surface
  - must not lose face
  - private, respectful
  - introvert
  - does not interrupt
  - prefers established processes
  - punctual
  - thinks in silence
Concepts of Time

Linear-active

Multi-active & reactive
Building trust across cultures

Adam’s dilemma:

Read the text and choose what would you do if you were on Adam’s place
Building trust across cultures
### Trust variance

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<th>Multi-active</th>
<th>Reactive</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trust in institutions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Trust in in-group intimates</strong></td>
<td><strong>Trust in reciprocity; schoolmates</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance (do what you say you will do)</td>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>Protecting the other’s face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>Closeness</td>
<td>Courtesy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific truth</td>
<td>Refusal to capitalise on others' weakness</td>
<td>Sacrifice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficient officialdom</td>
<td>Showing the other one’s weakness</td>
<td>Reciprocal attention</td>
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Trust based on

- Performance (do what you say you will do)
- Consistency
- Scientific truth
- Efficient officialdom
- Compassion
- Closeness
- Refusal to capitalise on others' weakness
- Showing the other one’s weakness
- Protecting the other’s face
- Courtesy
- Sacrifice
- Reciprocal attention
Intercultural Communication
Problems affecting trust

- Coded speech (British)
- Hype, hard sell (U.S)
- Flexible, creative truth (Latin)
- Silence (Japanese, Finnish)
- Smiles (Asian)
- Humour (British, U.S)
- Verbosity (Latin)
- Loudness (Arab)
- Ambiguity (Asian)
Concept of truth across cultures
Culturally responsive negotiation strategies

**THEM:** familiarity with our culture

- Low
  - Employ agent or adviser
  - Adapt to the other party’s script
- High
  - Induce them to follow your script
  - Embrace their script

**US:** familiarity with their culture

- Low
- High
  - Improvise
“Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves.”

Carl Jung
Negotiation checklist

• What the likely priorities of the other side? (*Profit, long-term relationship, victory, harmony?*)

• Who is the decision maker? (*One person, several, consensus?*)

• How much flexibility can be observed on the other side? (*Give-and-take, moderation, fixed positions?*)

• Which debating style they are likely to adopt? (*Deductive, inductive, freewheeling, aggressive corteous?*)

• How much protocol does the other side expect?

• How sensitive is the other side?
• How does the other side perceive time? (*Time is money, time is linear, time is relative, good things need time?*)
• How big is the cultural difference?
• How much body language and posture can be expected? (*Facial expression, impassivity, gestures, emotion?*)
• How acceptable are their ethics to us? (*Observance of contracts, notion of truth?*)
• What are the mechanisms for breaking deadlocks or smoothing difficulties?
• Is there a wider context of negotiation?
• Will there be a language problem? (*Common language, interpreters?*)