

CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA

Why study intercultural communication?

What is the difference between low and high context communication styles?

How does individualism/collectivism affect communication across cultures?

How can I be a more effective intercultural communicator?

PRE-LECTURE QUESTIONS

On a scale of 1-10, how much freedom do you want your boss to give you?

- 1 = very little freedom, lots of oversight and advice
- 10 = lots of freedom, little oversight from manager

Describe your communication style.

- Are you direct in your comments and when expressing your ideas?
- Are you likely to actively participate in a conversation or wait to hear what others have to say?
- What about receiving negative feedback? Do you like the feedback softened and given in private, or are you comfortable hearing it directly and in front of others?

Think back to your last team project. How involved was each member in the discussion?

- What was the leadership style of the team lead? Did he/she/they solicit suggestions?
- Was each person specifically asked their opinion, or was it up to each team member to add their views if/when they felt comfortable?

EFFECTIVE MULTICULTURAL TEAMS:



Produce higher quality ideas

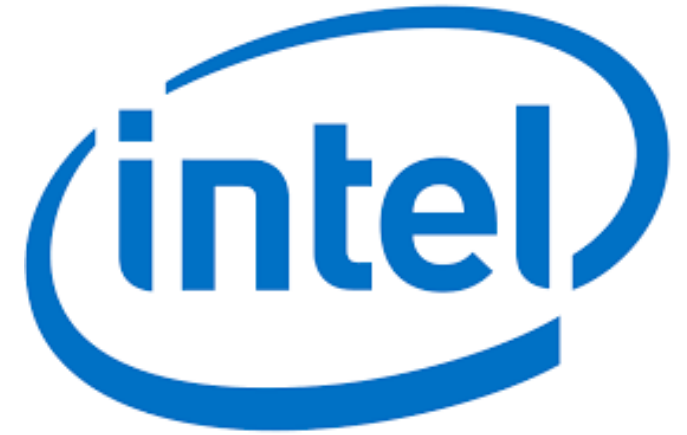


Reduce costs of international operations

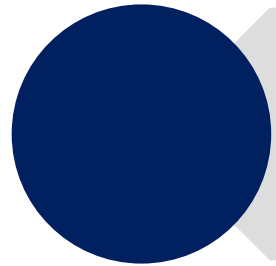


Provide higher levels of profit

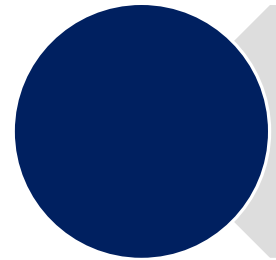
90% OF CEOS BELIEVE THAT CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION AFFECTS PROFIT, REVENUE, AND MARKET SHARE.
— COMPETING ACROSS BORDERS, *THE ECONOMIST INTELLIGENCE UNIT*, 2012



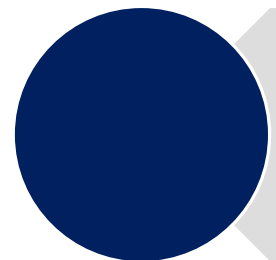
REASONS MULTICULTURAL TEAMS ARE INEFFECTIVE:



Language Barriers



Assumption of Similarity



Inability to Explain Cultural Norms

CAVEAT

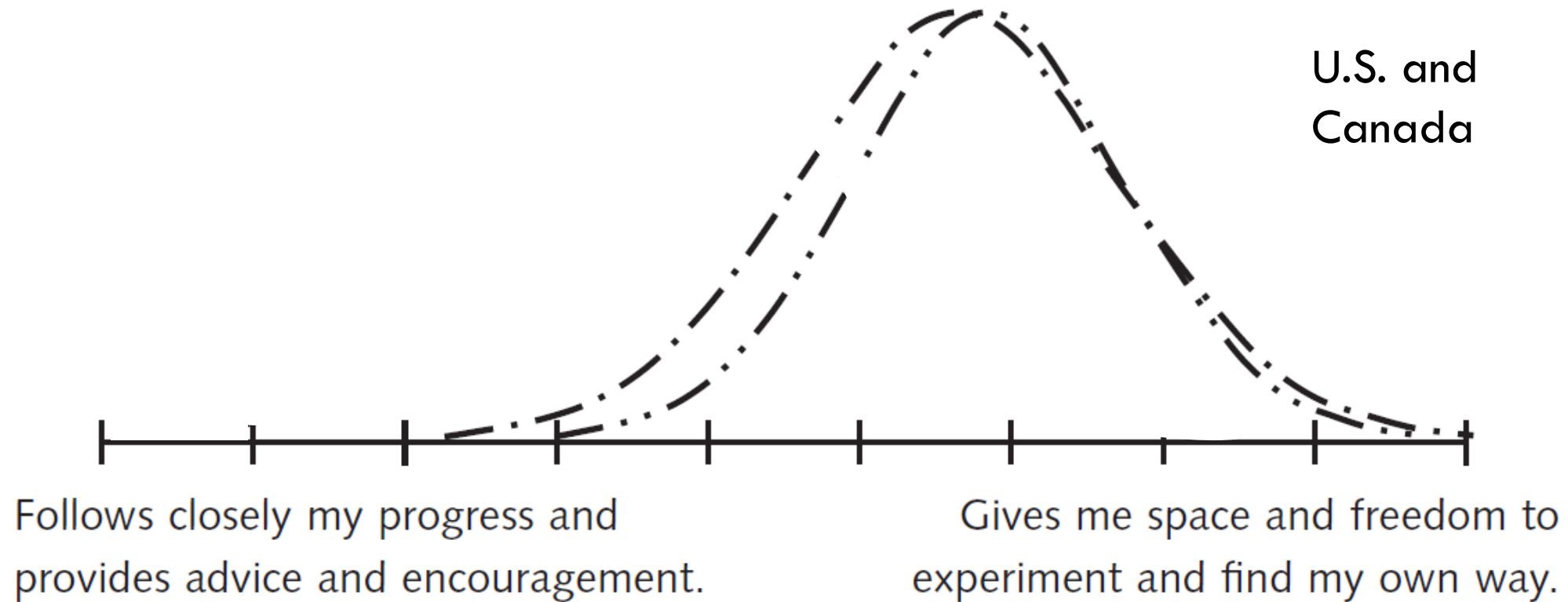
People from different countries have worldviews that may differ from your own, but individual preferences still exist.

EXAMPLE OF PERSONAL PREFERENCE AND CULTURE

LaRoche and Rutherford

- Study on cultural and work preferences
- Asked workers from different countries how involved they want their managers to be:
 - Scale from 1-10: I prefer that my manager
 - Follows closely my progress and provides advice and encouragement
 - Gives me space and freedom to experiment and find my own way.

Question: I prefer that my manager:



Question: I prefer that my manager:

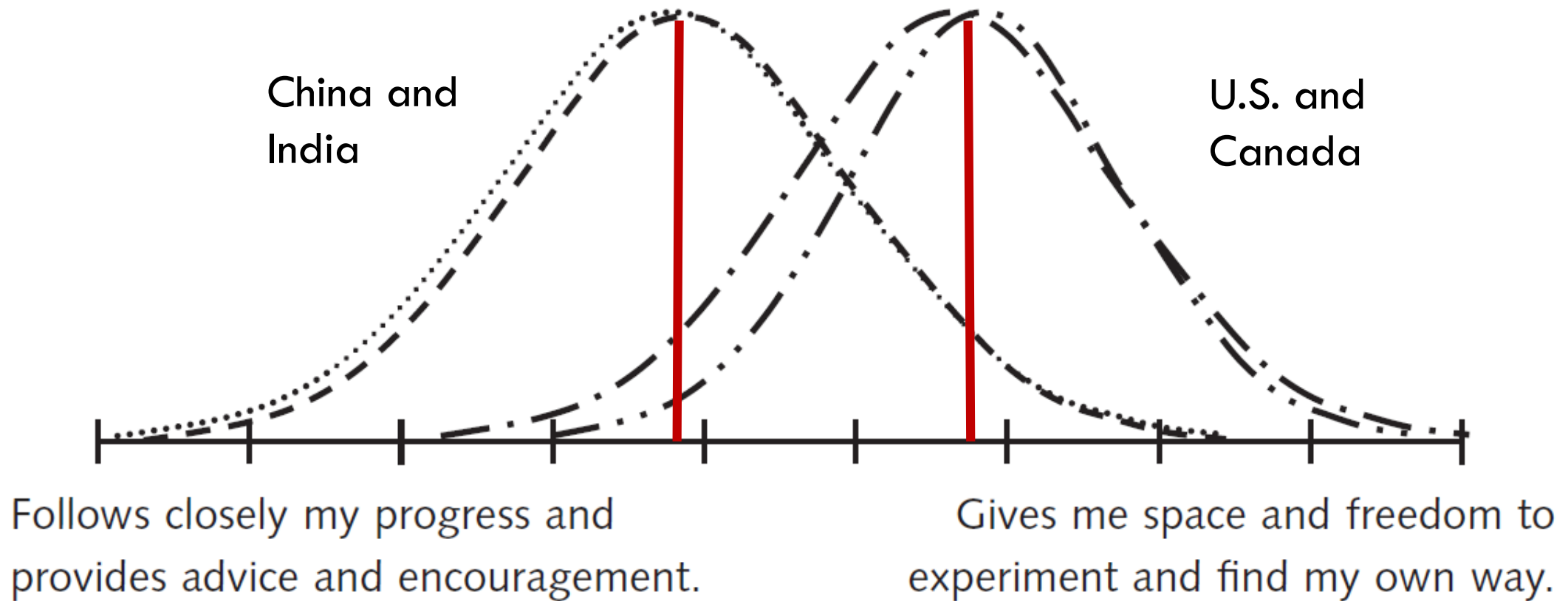
China and
India

U.S. and
Canada

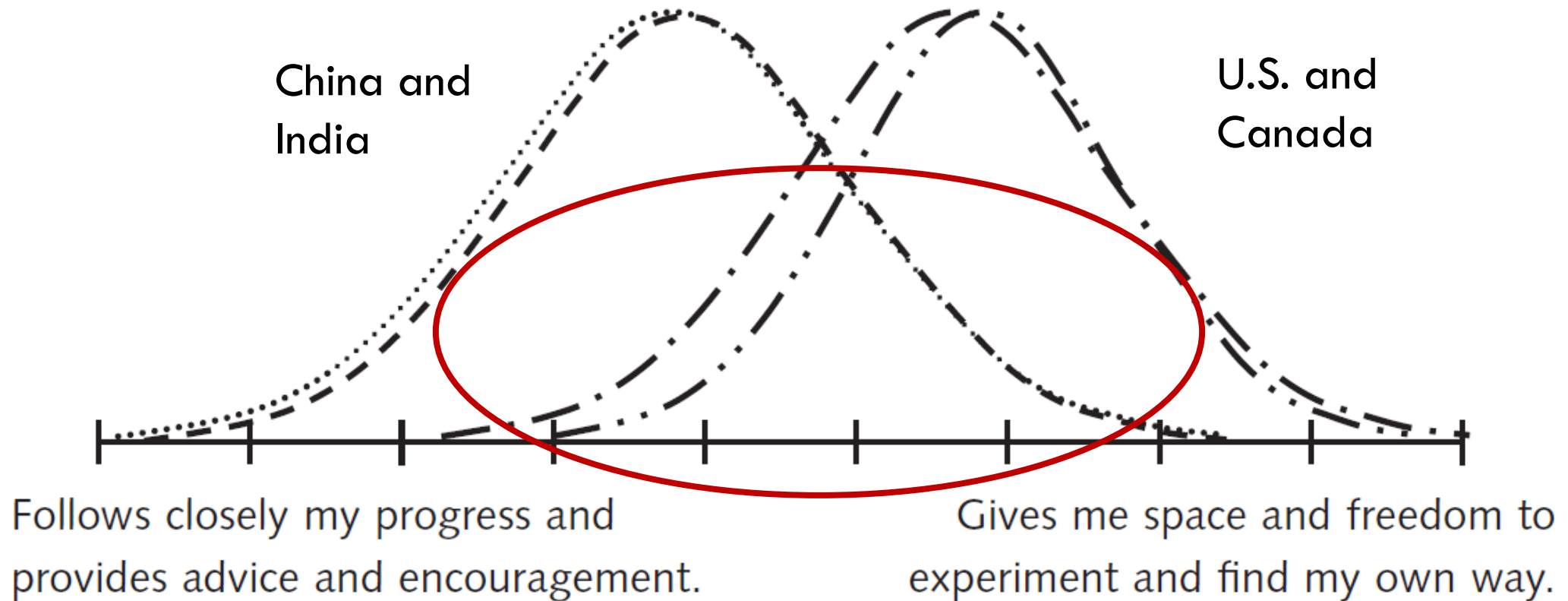
Follows closely my progress and
provides advice and encouragement.

Gives me space and freedom to
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Question: I prefer that my manager:



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CULTURAL DIMENSION: LOW/HIGH CONTEXT

Hall



A diagram comparing two communication styles. On the left, there are two dark blue rounded rectangular boxes. The top box is labeled 'Low Context' and the bottom box is labeled 'High Context'. To the right of each box is a large, light gray arrow pointing to the right. Inside each gray arrow, there is a bulleted list of characteristics for that communication style. A thin vertical gray line is positioned to the left of the 'Low Context' box.

Low Context

- Is Direct Spoken/Written
- May appear rude

High Context

- Implied/Context Specific
- May be misunderstood

LOW/HIGH MISCOMMUNICATION

Exchange between Mr. Diaz and Mr. Chen

Culture Map by Erin Meyer

LOW/HIGH MISCOMMUNICATION



DIRECT/INDIRECT CONTINUUM

US Netherlands Finland Spain Italy Singapore Iran China Japan
Australia Germany Denmark Poland Brazil Mexico France India Kenya Korea
Canada UK Argentina Peru Russia Saudi Arabia Indonesia

←
Low-Context

High-Context →

DIRECT/INDIRECT CONTINUUM



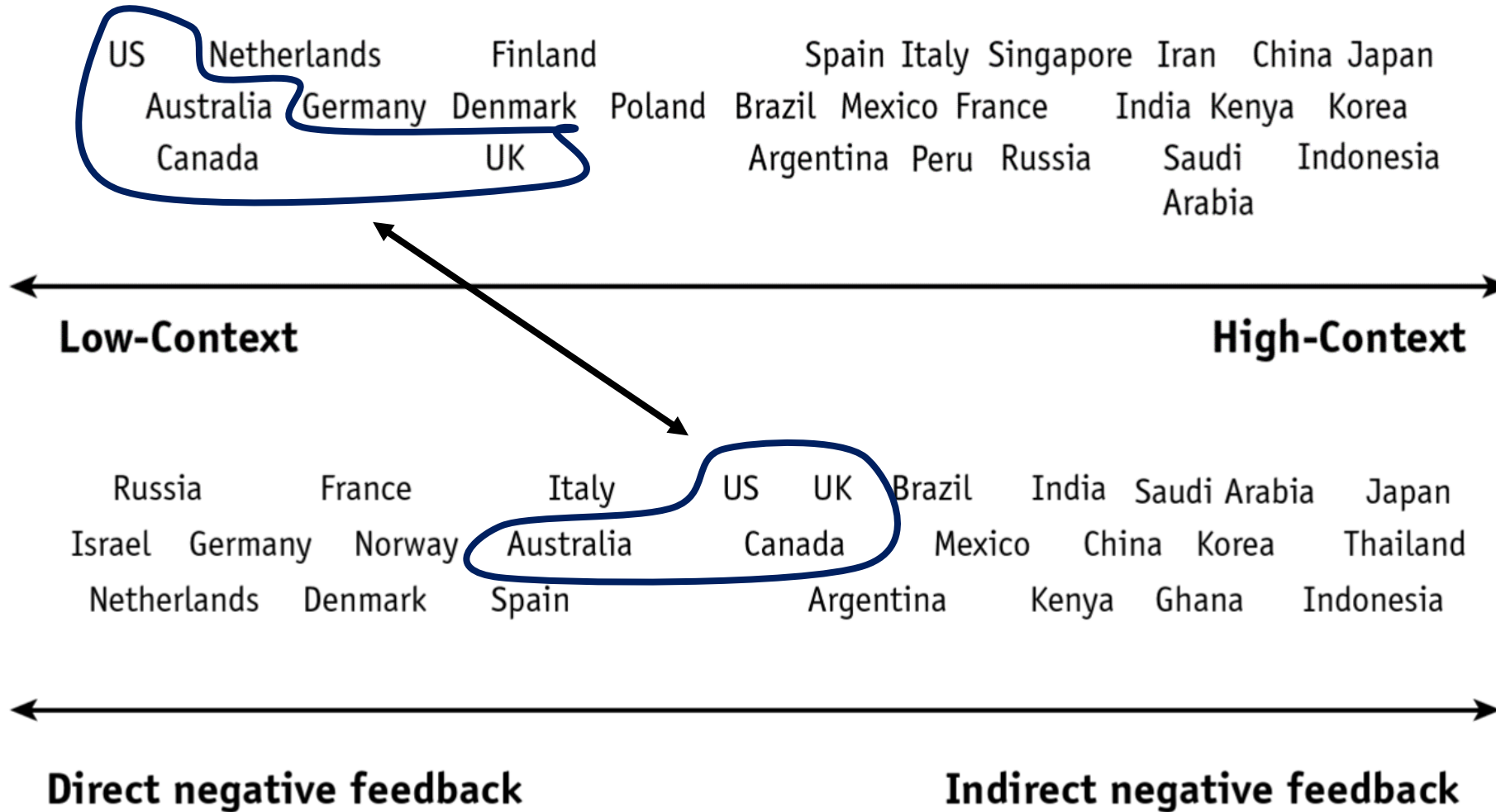
Direct Negative Feedback

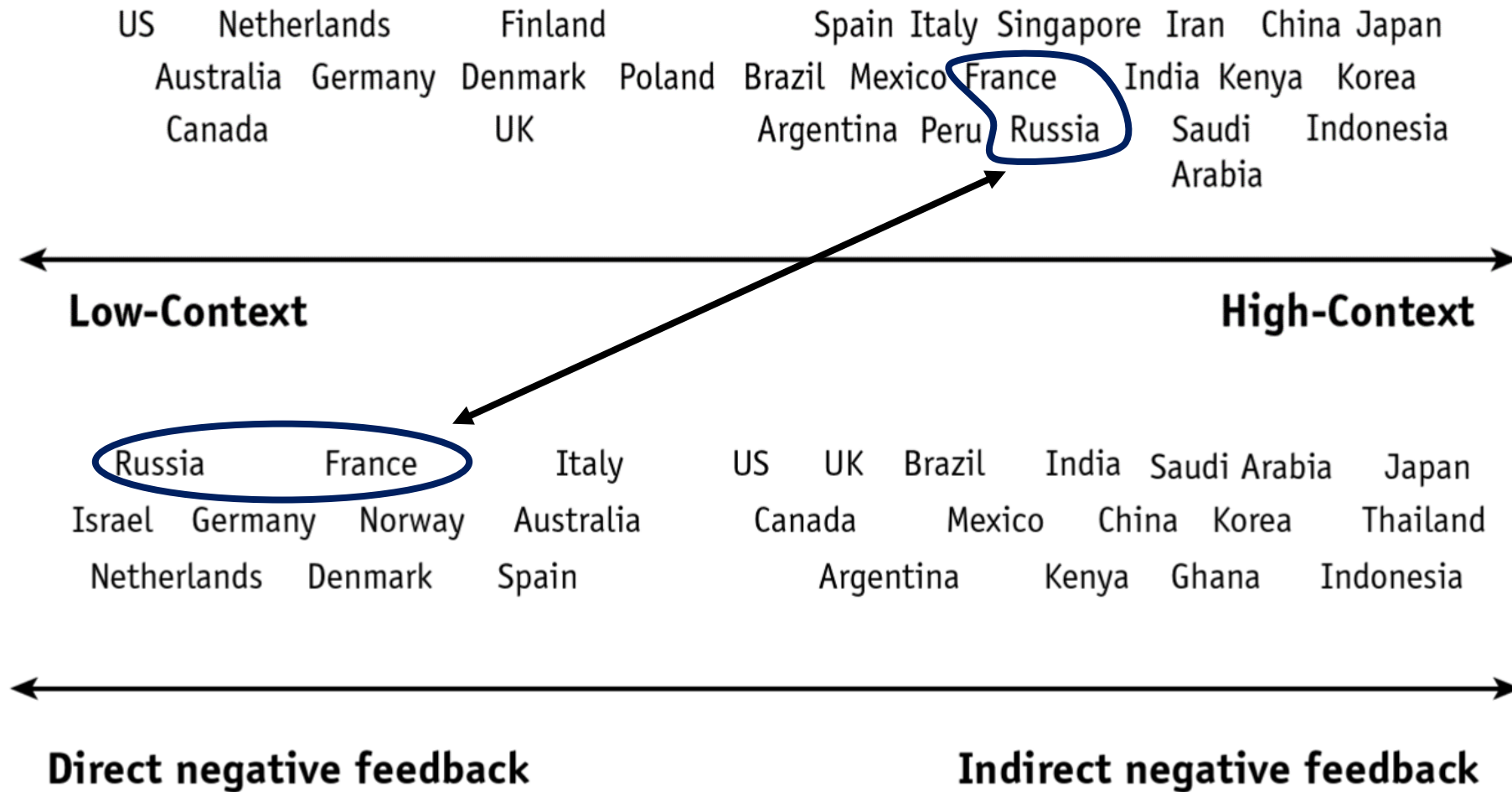
- Is blunt/not softened by compliments
- Can be given in front of a group
- Uses upgraders: absolutely, always

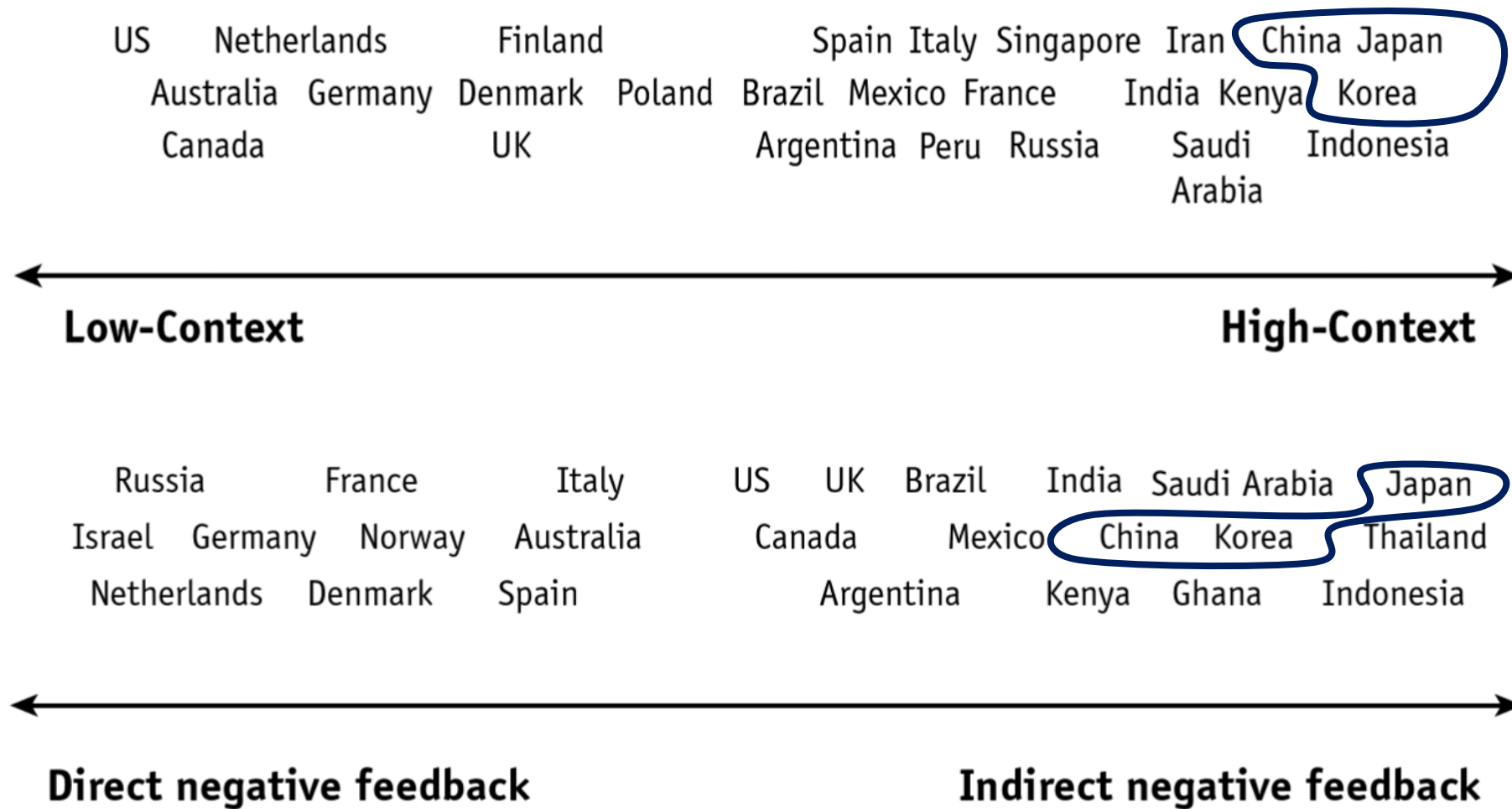
Indirect Negative Feedback

- Is implied or wrapped in positive feedback
- Is given in private
- Uses downgraders: sometimes, a bit









TEAM TASK

Read Task 1 posted on Moodle.

Answer the following questions:

How might preferences for high/low context communication styles, including the 3-second rule, play a role in the discrepancy between Asian and American speakers' participation levels in this study?

What do you think was done differently in the cooperative leadership versus the directive leadership to ensure participation was more equal? OR what can you do to encourage all members of a group to participate?

CULTURAL DIMENSION: INDIVIDUALISM/COLLECTIVISM

Hofstede

INDIVIDUALISTIC-COLLECTIVISTIC



Individualistic Cultures

Me Culture

Accomplishments reflect positively on the individual

30% of world



Collectivistic Cultures

We Culture

Accomplishments reflect positively on the group

70% of the world

INDIVIDUALISM/COLLECTIVISM CONTINUUM



CONFLICT FACE-NEGOTIATION THEORY

People in all cultures share the need to maintain and negotiate “face.”

(Ting-Toomey, 2004)



The diagram consists of three dark blue circles arranged vertically on the left side of the slide. Each circle is connected to a horizontal light gray bar that contains text. The circles are connected by thin gray lines, and each circle has a short gray line extending from its top-left and bottom-left edges.

Self-Face: Concern for one's image, the extent to which we feel valued.

Other-Face: Concern for others' self image and the extent to which we care about how they feel valued.

Mutual-Face: Concern for everyone's face and the development of a positive relationship.

SAVING FACE: INDIVIDUALISM



Potential Positives

- Provides opportunities for growth based on one's accomplishments
- Resolves conflict faster if directly addressed



Potential Challenges

- Prioritizes individual success over group's
- Attributes failure to external causes (technology, other people)

SAVING FACE: COLLECTIVISM



Potential Positives

- Acknowledges mistakes quickly
- Preserves group harmony



Potential Challenges

- Avoids confrontation
- Relies on mediators when conflict

TEAM TASK

Read Task 1 posted on Moodle.

Identify cultural stumbling blocks based on low/high context preferences and individualism/collectivism.

WANT MORE?

- Go to: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/>
 - Find your self-identified “home” country and look at its orientation.
- Read *Culture Map* by Erin Meyer



RESOURCES

Aritz, J., & Walker, R. C. (2014). Leadership Styles in Multicultural Groups: Americans and East Asians Working Together. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 51(1), 72–92.

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Friedman, V. J., & Antal, A. B. (2005). Negotiating Reality: A Theory of Action Approach to Intercultural Competence. *Management Learning*, 36(1), 69–86.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507605049904>

Matveev, A. V., & Nelson, P. E. (2004). Cross Cultural Communication Competence and Multicultural Team Performance: Perceptions of American and Russian Managers. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 4(2), 253–270.

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