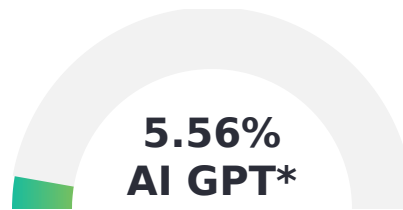# Your Text is Human Written

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BM7703 Cross-Cultural Issues in International Business

Assessment 001

Sem 1 2025-26

Student ID:

1. What issues might individual group members experience whilst working on this project? Consider communication and trust.

The GlosTech project team comprises individuals from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, China, and Nigeria. Although this diversity has the potential to enhance innovation, it also creates complicated communication and trust issues.

The Culture Map of Meyer (2015) is used in this analysis as it compares the national trend on eight behavioural scales, including communication, evaluation, trust, and scheduling. This model is selected because it explains the actual interaction of employees in a workplace and not abstract values (Barmeyer et al., 2019, p. 77). Unlike the Hofstede dimension, the framework by Meyer (2015) delves into the ways human beings communicate, provide feedback, and establish credibility. It is thus better applied to find out issues of practical collaboration.

Meyer (2015, pp. 45-47) and Hall (1976, p. 91) describe the way people communicate to exist along a scale that moves from low-context to high-context. According to their analysis, the UK (2) and the Netherlands (3) prefer explicit messages, whereas China (9) and Nigeria (8) employ shared meaning and a relational tone. Consequently, British or Dutch engineers would expect to receive concise written instructions, which their Chinese and Nigerian counterparts might interpret as an indication of contempt (Ng et al., 2019, p. 156). This is because low-context speakers tend to overtake during meetings and misinterpret silence as

acceptance, as reported by Nabintu (2025, p. 35). Tenzer and Pudelko (2020, p. 749) found that this type of misalignment can delay decisions by approximately 20%. According to Meyer (2016), cultural map, British and Dutch employees are frank with their feedback in the evaluation scale (3), whereas Chinese (8) and Nigerian (7) employees like milder feedback. With the wide disparity between the communication levels of the countries, structured phrasing like "What if we tried…" will help maintain clarity in communication without causing offense. Moore (2024, p. 11) stated that when a set of common phrasing rules is developed and established between parties in different communication contexts, defensiveness is minimised and shared learning is enhanced.

Differences in trust worsen these communication problems. According to Meyer (2014, pp. 155-157), task-based trust is grounded in competence, while relationship-based trust is rooted in emotional connection. In this context, the Netherlands and the UK are even in relationships (5), but China (8) and Nigeria (7) are more relationship-oriented. This rift is supported by quantitative data, as the World Values Survey (2023) report reveals that only 23% of Nigerians believe that the majority of people can be trusted, whereas in the Netherlands, the figure is 61% (CBS, 2019). According to Edelman (2024), business trust levels in China are 69%, while in the UK, the level is only 44%. These statistics confirm that, for British colleagues, reliability is often equated with transparency, whereas for Chinese and Nigerian colleagues, it is often associated with loyalty. With this kind of communication mindset, minor misunderstandings can destroy confidence when such expectations come into conflict. This means that trustworthiness is defined differently across societies, so GlosTech's leader must recognise that documentation alone is insufficient without cultivating human connection.

Due to the development of trust through interaction, informal communication is necessary. According to Hankimaa (2021, p. 47), collectivist employees consider social interaction as a sign of good faith. In the virtual world, they are not present, and this can be interpreted as a lack of concern. Studies on global teams reveal that a prompt response within twenty-four hours can significantly increase perceived dependability (Hayati & Sinha, 2024, p. 134). Thus, the manager is to institutionalise timely recognition and brief check-ins, as well as rotation of meeting chairs, to create a hierarchical balance. These minor rituals indicate consideration of both

relational and performance-related expectations (Ng et al., 2019, p. 156). Integrity is also an indicator of justice, which Browaeys and Price (2019, p. 202) identify as the best predictor of cross-cultural cohesion. By turning responsiveness into a systematic rule, rather than an unofficial courtesy, GlosTech can translate the cultural difference into a systematic discipline. Simultaneously, this type of measure instils predictability, which every culture perceives as reliability.

Another issue that may be experienced is cultural variation in handling disagreements. Based on Meyer's (2014, pp.167 - 169) findings, open debate is regarded as fruitful by the UK and Netherlands (4), but in China (9) and Nigeria (7), it is not applicable. From the perspective of a Chinese colleague (East Asian context), taking a direct criticism from a Dutch or British co-worker can jeopardize mianzi (a local term for self-dignity) (Nguyen, 2021, pp. 134 - 136). The Huawei communication crisis has shown that Western bluntness is perceived as disrespect by Chinese partners (Han, 2018, p. 14). According to Hall (1976, p. 102), high-context cultures, such as China, prioritise a confidential solution over a public one, isolating truth and time. This means that GlosTech needs to allow written or one-on-one feedback to ensure that honesty is upheld without causing embarrassment. For scheduling, linear-time cultures such as the UK (7) and the Netherlands (8) emphasise punctuality, with China (6) and Nigeria (5) making a preference for flexibility in scheduling (Meyer, 2014, p. 221). To this end, if the long-term orientation of China (77) and Nigeria (8) remains unaddressed, the differences will likely cause mutual frustration regarding reliability.

The overall impact of these dimensions is a cycle of misunderstanding. Members of low-context cultures might overcommunicate, whereas high-context co-workers rely on re asdf; lkjlational intuition. The directness exhibited by the British or Dutch efficiency can deter those who appreciate discretion, such as China (Meyer, 2014, p. 174). Levitt (2022, p. 7) demonstrates that this tension is ex asdf ;lkj acerbated by varying time orientations, which redefine the concept of commitment. According to the PwC (2021) Global Culture Survey, 67% of organisations prioritise culture over operations, but only 42% of employees feel uninhibited about discussing cultural conflicts. OECD (2025) trust indicators also suggest that social attitudes have a significant impact on collaboration in the workplace. These results indicate that communication and trust issues are not personal, but rather structural. They arise

when managers fail to develop systems that convert cultural differences into a shared process, which is a key point of view in Meyer's (2014) model of practical intercultural management.

In conclusion, applying Meyer's (2016) Culture Map reveals that the GlosTech team will encounter issues stemming from misaligned communication norms and differing trust foundations asdf ;lkj. UK and Dutch members are oriented towards direct communication, task-focused reliability, and strict time management, whereas Chi asdf ; lkj nese and Nigerian colleagues are oriented towards nuances, relationship-based trust, and time flexibility (Meyer, 2014). Such contrasts are profound, as global surveys have shown that trust rates drop as low as 23% in Nigeria and as high as 61% in the Netherlands (World Values Survey, 2022; Edelman, 2024). As such, the gaps undermine collaboration (Arduini et al., 2023, p. 35). Thus, the key communication and trust problems of the GlosTech company will not be due to personal negligence, but rather a factor of unrecognised cultural justification.

2. How best to lead the team? What issues might the team experience? How should decisions be made, and what style of leadership should they use?

Given that the team at GlosTech includes members from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, China, and Nigeria, each has different leadership expectations due to their respective national cultures. According to Hofstede et al. (2010), the cultural dimensions, as shown in Figure 1, indicate that the UK (Power Distance 35) and the Netherlands (38) are relatively low in power distance compared to China (80) and Nigeria (80). These differences indicate that British and Dutch professionals share a similar preference for participative dialogue. However, for Chinese and Nigerians, clear authority is valued (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Figure 1

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Scores for the UK, the Netherlands, China, and Nigeria

The studies by Deresky (2016, p. 341) and Browaeys and Price (2019, p. 406) validate the fact that, in the event of a collaboration between low-PDI and high-PDI cultures, a state of leadership confusion often emerges. In light of this, the UK manager must then adopt a consultative-authoritative hybrid leadership style. This approach is involved in the planning process but is not involved in the final decision (House et al., 2013, p. 53). This structure meets both expectations, egalitarian and

deferential. House, Dorfman, et al. (2013, p. 312) also support this with findings that suggest participative leadership, when combined with the element of humane leadership, positively affects the performance of culturally diverse groups by increasing the level of trust and accountability.

Individualism versus collectivism is a concept that also defines Leadership behaviour through shaping teamwork and motivation (Ang et al., 2021, p. 34). The Hofstede indices of cultural dimension (see Figure 1) indicate that the Netherlands (100) and the UK (76) have very high individualism in contrast to China (43) and Nigeria (0). The consequence of this is that members of individualistic cultures like the UK and the Netherlands desire autonomy and recognition, while those in collectivist cultures (China and Nigeria) prioritise loyalty to their group and maintaining harmony (Hofstede et al., 2010). The Polder Model of consensus, used by the Dutch, and the Ubuntu principle of empathy, used by the Africans, are both examples that demonstrate the collective decision-making ethics of each of these cultures (Karsten et al., 2008, p. 44; Ndlovu, 2016, p. 140). Umeh's (2025, p. 5) study demonstrates how loyalty and obedience reinforce unity; however, they hinder initiative in the Nigerian organisational context. On the other hand, a British study conducted by Bottery (2021, p. 206) reveals a strong link between transformational leadership and innovation through personal empowerment. Given this contrast in leadership philosophy, the GlosTech manager should therefore strike a balance between individual and team incentives in a manner that rewards individual creativity but holds on to the collective ownership. Empirical evidence from the PwC Global Culture Survey (2021, p. 13) supports this recommendation. The survey report indicates that culturally balanced reward systems increase team involvement by more than 20%.

Another issue that the team might face is that the styles of decision-making also vary in terms of uncertainty avoidance (UAI) and long-term orientation (LTO). The UK (UAI 35) and China (30) tend to accommodate ambiguity, whereas Nigeria (55) and the Netherlands (53) prefer clear rules (The Culture Factor Group, 2025). The long-term orientation in China is high (77) compared to that of Nigeria (8), which explains why Chinese members' strategic patience is higher than that of Nigerians, who tend to believe in quick results, as confirmed by Salaudeen and Guo (2024, p. 13). Such differences can lead to frustration regarding the speed and level of planning within

the GlosTech team. According to Guggenberger et al. (2023, p. 45), only half of companies worldwide believe they are prepared to handle such contrasts in a timely manner. To avoid being paralysed, GlosTech should adopt a staged planning approach, incorporating short-term deliverables within a long-term vision, in order to respect both views. From the analysis presented by Taras et al. (2016, p. 461), it is deduced that balanced time orientation enhances commitment and decreases turnover in international projects. Leadership effectiveness is, therefore, based on striking a balance between urgency and reflection in open milestone design. Masculinity versus femininity is another major issue that influences motivation and conflict management. The UK and China (score 66) imply that they are more supportive of competitive achievement, whereas the Netherlands (14) focuses on cooperation and well-being (The Culture Factor Group, 2025). The data on the parity of sexes in the workplace, provided by Pal et al. (2024), suggest that societies with more egalitarian and empathetic values have more satisfied employees, which is associated with the qualities of a feminine leader. This culture of consensus is already reflected in Dutch culture, where consensus is achieved through dialogue, as well as in Anglo and Chinese cultures, which value visible output (Taras et al., 2016, p. 458). What this means for the leader of GlosTech is to celebrate in team success, rather than individual aggression, without abdicating performance accountability. According to the LinkedIn Learning (2023) report, transparent and inspiring leaders increase engagement by 38% in all parts of the world. This means that a gender-conscious and humane approach also helps to lower cultural tension, as respect is shown in contexts of both masculine and feminine aspects.

Overall, the Hofstede indices of cultural dimension (Figure 1) suggest that the multicultural team at GlosTech requires an adaptive, evidence-based leadership approach. Power distance and collectivism in China and Nigeria require strict guidance and relations, whereas low hierarchy and individualism in the UK and the Netherlands require candidness and independence. The needs are competing, but a consultative-authoritative hybrid, participative in discussion and firm in execution, will best meet these needs. The Dutch consensus model should be combined with Confucian harmony and African Ubuntu empathy in decision-making, ensuring that everyone's leadership philosophical background is not left behind.

3. Who would be best to lead the negotiations with the Vietnamese company?

The Chinese team member will be best suited to command the negotiations with the Vietnamese supplier, utilising the High-Low-Context Communication Theory as suggested by Hall (1976). The model explains the differences in cultures in terms of the directness of communication, dependence on a shared meaning, and time orientation (Hall, 1976). The high-context, relationship-oriented, and polychronic culture is very relevant to the Confucian background of the Chinese, the respect shown towards the elders, and the focus on harmony in Vietnam (Nguyen, 2021, p. 123). As shown, both China and Vietnam have high Power Distance and low Individualism. This means that they share similar values of power and collectivism (Hofstede et al., 2010). In light of this, selecting a Chinese lead negotiator is better to increase the cultural similarity, minimise misinterpretation, and facilitate easier interpersonal relationships. The industry reports from Rivermate (2025) and Cosmos Sourcing (2025) emphasise that Vietnamese decision-makers prefer to build relations gradually and communicate indirectly. Taking this into consideration, a Chinese lead will thus create familiarity with language subtleties, hierarchy, and face-saving etiquette, which are significant cultural bridges that will make the dialogue respectful and understanding throughout the negotiation.

The Chinese and Vietnamese negotiation traditions are compatible with each other, as both traditions share a Confucian respect for hierarchy and social harmony (Tran, 2023, p. 7). These two cultures value seniority and emphasise finding a consensus; negotiations are based on the creation of relationships rather than contractual agreements (Chan et al., 2022, p. 32). More than 70% of the managers in Vietnam do not say no directly but save face, whereas Chinese negotiators use similar indirect phrasing and tolerance (Rivermate, 2025). Vietnam is found to have a lean towards flexible and deliberative decision-making as per the ERIA/OECD (2024, p. 361) and the World Bank (2023). As such, a Chinese manager, who is used to such rhythms, will read prolonged silence or pauses as a thoughtful reflection, and not dismissal. In addition, China's high Long-Term Orientation (87) compared to Vietnam's 57 in Figure 1 demonstrates the forward-looking asdf ;lkjnature of Vietnam, which adds to the commitment to long-term casdf ;lkj ooperation. Such cultural harmony leads to trust and lasting relationships that can be unintentionally disrupted by a low-context, face-saving communicator like a Chinese professional. Past regional partnerships also support this decision. The case of Unilever Vietnam

demonstrates that negotiations based on respect, fostering long-term relationships, and collaboration with local partners lead to sustained market success (Noi, 2021, p. 35). On the same note, ASEAN intra-deal case studies emphasise that extended pre-contract rituals, including dinners, gift-giving, and informal get-togethers, develop lasting deals in a Vietnamese business environment (Rivermate, 2025). The knowledge and familiarity with these relationship rituals among Chinese negotiators will help preserve social balance in Vietnam, resulting in less friction in the long run. In contrast to these traits, representatives of Dutch or British culture exhibit low-context and monochronic patterns, which can be interpreted as signs of impatience or insensitivity (The Culture Factor, 2024). Empirical research by Bacouel (2022, p. 132) found that Western negotiators tend to pursue quick, win-lose results, which often leads to a loss of trust when they encounter Asian counterparts. Therefore, having a Chinese member who is respectful of the Vietnamese negotiation pace and saves face is essential to GlosTech.

The selection of the Chinese professional as the lead negotiator also extends to the leadership compatibility with the UK project manager, who retains the overall coordination. The adaptive and moderate Low-Context communication style of the UK allows for the alignment of the supervisory relationship that is not culturally interfered with (Deresky, 2016, p. 5). The manager is able to frame the strategic goals and leave the Chinese negotiator to handle interpersonal sensitivity, ensuring harmony and serving as a bridge between the transparency of the West and the Eastern subtlety. According to Edelman (2024), the trust in business in Asia (63%) is more than the trust in government, and it is also shown that corporate and not bureaucratic relationships lead to credibility. For effective business, when the British strategic precision is combined with the Chinese interpersonal skills, institutional trust and interpersonal warmth are developed. This duality reflects Hall's (1976) principle of bridging context levels through complementary leadership styles. It is direct enough to ensure clarity and indirect enough to ensure respect, minimising cultural dissonance on both sides.

Ultimately, appointing the Chinese team member as the lead negotiator would be the most compatible decision in terms of culture and strategy. To reiterate Hall's (1976) theory, Vietnam and China are societies that prioritise high-context, polychronic cultures, where relationships take precedence over strict deadlines. As

shown in Figure 1, both societies exhibit hierarchical and asdf ;lkj collectivist characteristics. The ERIA/OECD (2024), Rivermate (2025), and World Bank (2023) reports indicate that negotiation success in Vietnam is strongly influenced by traits such as patience, mutual respect, and hierarchical awareness. asdf;lkj These attributes are typical of the Chinese and are required in this part of the world (i.e., East Asia) (Ang et al., 2021, pp. 34-41). This arrangement is also beneficial and compatible with the UK manager. He still exercises overall decision-making power but leaves culasdf;lkj turally sensitive discussions to the trusted intermediary, which is the Chinese lead negotiator in this case. ==Taras et al. (2016, p. 465) confirm that cultural fit among negotiators can increase the sustainability and satisfaction of the negotiation process by more than 30%.== Therefore, selecting the Chinese representative to lead the negotiation will create a balance between the two parties. The partnership will be respectful of Vietnamese suppliers and their traditions, efficient for GlosTech's interests, and compatible with continued cooperation.