



Cultural Intelligence

Our cultural differences are a global strength! Accepting and understanding those differences **makes our world a better place**, and helps you become more employable!

Remember to **build trust, listen, and be flexible**. Recognise that all cultures aren't the same and that different cultures have different business practices as a result. **Politeness, kindness, and respectfulness go a long way!**

Be ready to work with cultures that are **more individualistic** or ones that are **more collectively focused**.

Some cultures, such as American or Swiss culture, are **much more transactional** with their business and prefer to get to "the point" quite quickly. Other cultures, such as Mexican, Eritrean, or Irish, might be **more focused on interpersonal connections** and would focus more on non-business related things.

Other cultures have different ways of communicating: some are much more **direct**, while others might be more **indirect**. Cultures with a more direct form of communication might not avoid disagreement or confrontation as much as a culture with indirect ways of communicating.

Some things to remind yourself:

How does the culture communicate?

More directly or more indirectly? What can you do to make sure you understand what is being said?

Is the culture more transactional, or more interpersonal?

How does the culture view change? Are they more change-averse, or more change tolerant?

What motivations are socially important to a culture? What does 'success' mean to a culture? Some cultures might be focused more on professional success, while others encourage more of a balance of personal, family, and professional success.

What year is it for this culture?

Not all cultures have the same calendar!

How does this culture use humour? Some might appreciate it, but others might see it in a negative way.

What holidays are near?

Holidays are very important in almost every culture, so keep those in mind!

How does the culture feel about gifts?

Some cultures might appreciate it, and others might prohibit it.

How does the culture use time?

Does a certain culture maintain perfect punctuality, or are they more fluid about it? How can you adapt to best fit into each one?

How rigid is a hierarchy in a culture? Some cultures use a strict social and professional hierarchy, while others are more fluid and less-established.

Avoid stereotypes:

Every culture is complex and ever-changing, and not everyone from a culture is the same.

All of these can show care and research, and can help you develop a worldly mindset that will help you not just get employed – **but help better understand each other.**

Perhaps the most important thing: **always be ready and open to learn.**