

The Lewis Model is the latest to gain world-wide recognition, being developed in the 1990s and articulated in Richard Lewis's blockbuster, *When Cultures Collide* (1996), which won the US Book of the Month Award in 1997. Lewis, after visiting 135 countries and working in more than 20 of them, came to the conclusion that humans can be divided into 3 clear categories, based not on nationality or religion but on BEHAVIOUR. He named his typologies Linear-active, Multi-active and Reactive.

Lewis considered that previous cross-culturalists, in accumulating the multiplicity of dimensions listed in the preceding paragraph, ran the risk of creating confusion for those who sought clarity and succinctness. Moreover, he pointed out that the experts' preoccupation with north/south, mono-chronic/poly-chronic dichotomies, had caused them to overlook or ignore the powerful Asian mindset (comprising, in fact, half of humanity). He named this behavioural category Reactive, thereby creating a model that is essentially tripartite and cites the following characteristics:

characteristics

The Linear-active group is easily identified. It comprises: the English-speaking world – North America, Britain, Australia and New Zealand, and Northern Europe, including Scandinavia and Germanic countries.

The Reactive group is located in all major countries in Asia, except the Indian sub-continent, which is hybrid.

The Multi-actives are more scattered: Southern Europe, Mediterranean countries, South America, sub-Saharan Africa, Arab and other cultures in the Middle East, India and Pakistan and most of the Slavs. Though these cultures are wildly diverse, geographically and in their religions, beliefs and values, they can be categorised as a group, as behaviourally they follow the same pattern with the following traits and commonalities: emotion, talkativeness, rhetoric, drama, eloquence, persuasion, expressive body language, importance of religion or creed, primacy of family bonds, low trust societies, unpunctuality, variable work ethic, volatility, inadequate planning, capacity for compassion, collectivism, relationship-orientation, situational truth, dislike of officialdom, tactility, sociability, nepotism, excitability, changeability, sense of history, unease with strict discipline

NB While the three types are distinctive, each possesses behavioural elements from the other two categories. It is a question of which one is dominant. Many individuals deviate from the national type in a work situation e.g. engineers and accountants tend to be Linear, sales people Multi-active, lawyers and doctors Reactive.

The Lewis Model is based on data drawn from 50,000 executives taking residential courses and more than 150,000 online questionnaires to 68 different nationalities and has produced the following tripartite comparison according to country.

LINEAR-ACTIVE	MULTI-ACTIVE	REACTIVE
Talks half the time	Talks most of the time	Listens most of the time
Does one thing at a time	Does several things at once	Reacts to partner's action
Plans ahead step by step	Plans grand outline only	Looks at general principles
Polite but direct	Emotional	Polite, indirect
Partly conceals feelings	Displays feelings	Conceals feelings
Confronts with logic	Confronts emotionally	Never confronts
Dislikes losing face	Has good excuses	Must not lose face
Rarely interrupts	Often interrupts	Doesn't interrupt
Job-oriented	People-oriented	Very people-oriented
Sticks to facts	Feelings before facts	Statements are promises
Truth before diplomacy	Flexible truth	Diplomacy over truth
Sometimes impatient	Impatient	Patient
Limited body language	Unlimited body language	Subtle body language
Respects officialdom	Seeks out key person	Uses connections
Separates the social and professional	Mixes the social and professional	Connects the social and professional

We Need Each Other!

Description	Type	Needed to
task-oriented, highly-organized planners, who complete action chains by doing one thing at a time, preferably in accordance with a linear agenda	LINEAR-ACTIVE	organise, plan, see problems, analyse consequences, follow consistent policies, access rational thought, generate data, and challenge us objectively
emotional, loquacious and impulsive people who attach great importance to family, feelings, relationships, people in general. They like to do many things at the same time and are poor followers of agendas	MULTI-ACTIVE	generate enthusiasm, motivate, persuade, create a positive social atmosphere, access emotions, generate dialogue, and challenge us personally
good listeners, who rarely initiate action or discussion, preferring first to listen to and establish the other's position, then react to it and form their own opinion	REACTIVE	harmonise, act intuitively, be patient and see the big picture, think and act long-term, access feelings, listen, empathize and challenge us holistically