

The Iceberg Model

The culture of a country can be compared to an iceberg. Some elements or parts are visible or can be perceived with the five senses of a human:

- Sight/Vision
- Hearing/Audition
- Taste/Gustation
- Smell/Olfaction
- Touch/Somatosensation/Tactition/Mechanoreception

These elements are symbolized by the upper part of the iceberg. The majority of the iceberg as well as the majority of the elements and parts of a culture are not visible and therefore below the water surface. They can only be (partially) deduced from visible parts.

Examples for the upper part are

- food,
- clothing,
- eating habits,
- communication styles,
- how to educate kids,
- respect for elderly people,
- respect for dead,
- festivities,
- symbols and
- punctuality.

Below the water you have

- the importance of the individual or of groups,
- time concepts,
- the importance of work,
- the importance of religion,
- the role of females,
- values or
- the belief systems.

Very often the invisible part of the iceberg drives the visible part. Therefore insufficient knowledge of the invisible part of a culture can lead to categorization, prejudices or stereotypes towards individual members of the different cultures.

In this case Team India used the iceberg model to compare indirect and direct communication between two people from a different hierarchy level. The player has to order different conversation pairs either on the top (the visible part) if they communicate directly or on the bottom (invisible part) if the persons communicate in an indirect way. The different pairs are shown in the table below with a short description text each.

Employee - Boss	An employee of a company is talking to his boss.
Employee - Foreigner	An employee of a company is talking to a foreigner.
Employee - Female Boss	An employee of a company is talking to his female boss.
Boss - Foreigner	The boss of a company is talking to a foreigner.
Employee - Support Staff	An employee of a company is talking to a member of the support staff.
Boss - Employee	The boss of a company is talking to one of his employees.
Employee - Small Vendor	An employee of a company is talking to a small vendor of his company.

In this case it is important to keep in mind that the player is in India. Therefore the previous mentioned nine dimensions, their values and consequences should be kept in mind by the player.

