

# Cultural Differences and Ethics

This document is to talk about the Cultural Differences and Ethics I have experienced.

## The Exercise

Think about a situation in the past (around your study, job or hobby) where you interacted with a person or group of people from a different culture. Think about what the context was, from what culture that person was, what you found out during your contact and how you decided to handle it. I do not really have too much experience in interacting with other cultures for work or school, but I do travel sometimes. I've been to Sweden, Canada, Bulgaria and Egypt, and it's that last one that I will be doing this exercise with. This is because from anywhere that I have been, this one felt the most different and it's my most recent trip, so I still have some memories from that time. I will be referring to "we" because I was with my brother most of the time in Egypt.

## My Experience

I have had a few experiences in Egypt that would be very different here in the Netherlands.

To begin when we were walking in Egypt, and then mainly the very touristy places (Like the tombs, the pyramids, etc), I noticed that there are a lot of street shops, where they just push stuff in your hand and they want to sell it. Luckily during our visit to the Valley of the Kings, we had a tour guide that stopped those street vendors to annoy us into buying stuff. That's where I really noticed how people reacted to our tour guide, they acted like our tour guide was "in charge", they weren't scared but they backed off quickly.

Talking about my tour guide, she was very determined into being our tour guide. When we were at the Valley of the Kings, she let us loose to explore it for our own and meet up at a specific place later. She mentioned earlier that someone close to her passed away recently, so when we were ready to meet up she was being comforted by what I assume were friends of hers. My brother and I decided to wait for her to be ready. Eventually when it looked like she was ready we met up and she was sorry for making us wait. While me and my brother were like doesn't matter, someone close to you passed away so you should be able to mourn when you want to.

It was really showing how Egyptians were very work-driven. They really wanted to do their job without thinking about their personal life.

Using Hofstede's Country Comparison Tool we can compare Egypt and the Netherlands. We can see what I talked about before about the fact that those street vendors listened to our tour guide when she said they had to stop. It's because Egyptians are very aware of a power hierarchy.

For the fact that our Tour Guide was more focussed on guiding us than mourning is what you see with Indulgence. They aren't very indulged, they don't put much emphasis on leisure time or in our case mourning time. They have the perception that they are restrained by social norms and feel like indulging themselves is somewhat wrong

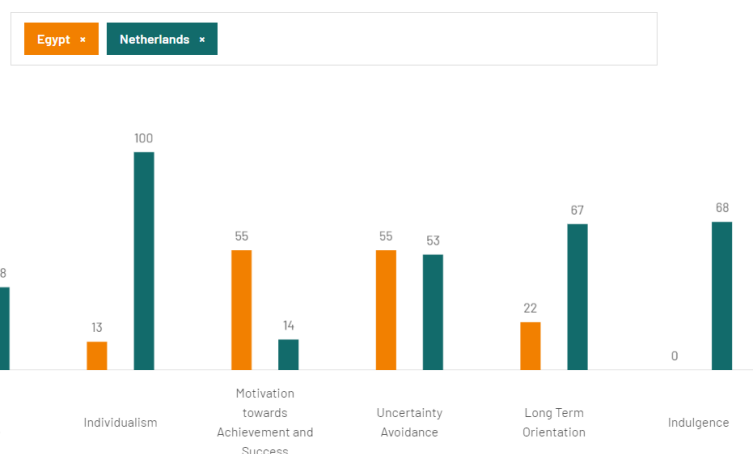


Figure 1 | Country Comparison between Egypt and the Netherlands  
source: [Hofstede Country Comparison Tool](#)

## The Lewis Model

The Lewis Model shows that certain cultures have different kind of behaviours. With these behaviours being Linear-Active, Multi-Active and Reactive. Figure 2 shows the differences between the three types.

**Linear-Active:** Task-oriented, highly organized planners, who prefer getting things done, one task at a time in a planned sequence.

**Multi-Active:** Emotional and impulsive who see family, feelings and relationships ahead of following an agenda.

**Reactive:** Polite, attentive listeners, who rarely initiate action or discussion, instead react to it and for their own opinion.

Source: <https://redtangerine.org/the-lewis-model/>

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

Figure 2 | Explaining differences between the three types of behaviours

source: [CrossCulture](https://redtangerine.org/the-lewis-model/)

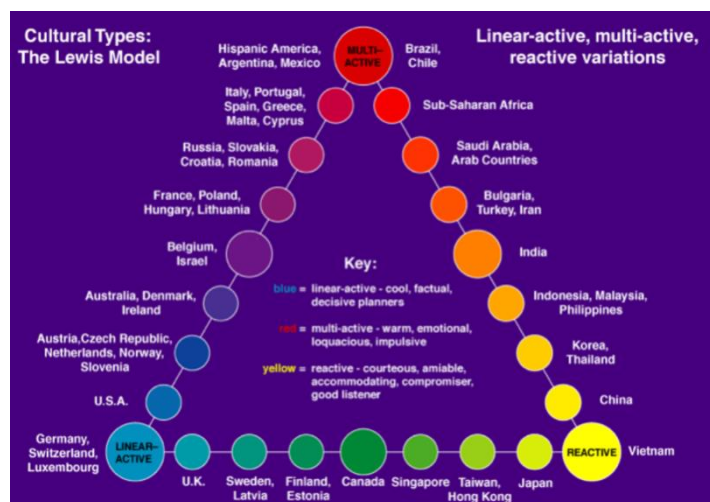


Figure 3 | The Lewis Model

source: [CrossCulture](https://redtangerine.org/the-lewis-model/)

Based on what I experienced Egyptians talk a lot, trying to sell us all kinds of things, they interrupt a lot of the time and are very impatient. Based on the Lewis Model in Figure 3. They aren't directly mentioned but Egypt falls under "**Saudi Arabia, Arab Countries**". These are located close to "Multi-Active". Which in my eyes make sense based on what I just said. They weren't showing lots of feelings or were emotional, which are features of multi-active, then again Egypt isn't completely in Multi-Active so it's entirely possible that they do fall close to the Multi-Active behaviour.