

Epita Cross-Border Management Class

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Cross-border Management

Fifth class

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In-class test 1/8

1. **Which concept best describes the style used in the paragraphs below giving instructions for a test?**
"For each question below, choose the answer that seems best appropriate to you. Read each answer carefully as some choices are very similar, however there is only ONE valid answer per question. Please circle your answer. You may come back to a question later on and change the answer. However, once you will have validated all your answers and you won't be able to make any changes. You have 60 minutes to complete the test. If you try to submit your answers passed the deadline, you won't be able to send out the document and you will be given a 0 grade. You may, however, send out the answers before the end of the given timeline"
 - a. High context (implicit)
 - b. Low context (explicit)
 - c. Direct
 - d. Indirect
2. **Imagine you are a functional team leader who seeks to initiate a CHANGE process in a multicultural organization. What dimension would you need to pay particular attention to if you want to succeed in implementing this change?**
 - a. Independent to interdependent
 - b. Egalitarian to status
 - c. Risk to certainty
 - d. Task to relationship.
3. **What is self-awareness?**
 - a. Knowing one's own type of intelligence profile
 - b. Knowing one's team preferred style, dimension per dimension, like for instance GlobeSmart Profile
 - c. Knowing the profile of one's country of origin (or country of reference), dim per dim, like for instance GlobeSmart Profile
 - d. Knowing one's own preferred style, dimension per dimension, like for instance GlobeSmart Profile.

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In-class test 2/8

4. **What could be, in a professional cross-cultural context, the direct benefits of style switching?**
 - a. Become more flexible in terms of styles, the more you practice the more flexible you will become.
 - b. Limit misunderstanding and avoid conflicts with your counterparts
 - c. Reduce the perceived gap between you and another person, helping to connect and to create trust
 - d. All of the above.
5. **What is style switching?**
 - a. It's a cross-cultural strategy about mirroring as closely as possible A counterpart's preferred style on ONE dimension or at least dimension per dimension.
 - b. It's a cross-cultural strategy about mirroring as closely as possible SEVERAL PEOPLE's styles on ONE dimension or at least dimension per dimension.
 - c. It's a cross-cultural strategy about mirroring as closely as possible A counterpart's preferred style on ALL dimensions at once.
 - d. It's a cross-cultural strategy about mirroring as closely as possible SEVERAL PEOPLE's styles on ALL dimensions at once.
6. **When practicing style switching who should adapt?**
 - a. If I am from a different cultural group than the people I'm working with, I am one who should adapt (majority rule).
 - b. If my boss is trying to obtain something important from me, he/she is the one who should practice style switching (i.e. adapt).
 - c. If I have a project of strategic importance even if I am from the same cultural group as the others, I am the one who should practice style switching with the key decision-maker / each of my counterparts.
 - d. All of the above.

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In-class test 3/8

7. **Why is the iceberg metaphor used to speak about cultures?**
- a. The upper part of the iceberg is much smaller than the immersed part. Similarly, cultures also have a small visible part whereas the larger part is hidden and mostly unconscious to the people of the in-group.
 - b. Values drive behaviors, values are hidden like the lower part of the iceberg and behaviors are visible like the upper part of the iceberg.
 - c. "Below the water" are the cultural norms, values, beliefs, mental attitudes, and dimensions.
 - d. All of the above.
8. **In the situation below what dimension(s) is/are at the heart of the problem?**
A Chinese woman, Ms. He Yin, is expatriated to the U.S. Her quarterly performance evaluation takes place, and she speaks with you shortly afterwards. She tells you: "I have had my evaluation and I like it here. But, I did not get all top ratings and I did not get a promotion. Do you think the manager doesn't like me?" Meanwhile, her U.S. HR Manager calls you since He Yin has a matrix reporting relationship with you. The U.S. HR Manager says: "Things are going so-so with He Yin, she is always waiting for direction. Can you please work with her?"
- a. He Yin is status-oriented while the HR Manager who evaluated her is egalitarian.
 - b. He Yin is certainty-oriented while the HR Manager who evaluated her is risk-oriented.
 - c. He Yin is independent while the HR Manager who evaluated her is interdependent.
 - d. He Yin is status, certainty, and relationship-oriented while the HR Manager who evaluated her is egalitarian, risk, and task-oriented.

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In-class test 4/8

9. **What is the difference in terms of expected behavior between someone who is extremely interdependent (INTER) and someone who is extremely relationship-oriented (REL)?**
- a. The INTER person will focus on building relationships with key persons outside the group whereas the REL person will rather focus on one-on-one relationships to achieve tasks.
 - b. The INTER person will expect more personal involvement from group members including from the manager, whereas the REL person will most likely hesitate to ask questions or express opinions in a group situation such as a formal meeting.
 - c. The INTER person will feel comfortable being asked personal questions by outsiders such as 'Are you married?' 'How old are you?' 'How many children do you have?' whereas the REL person will not be comfortable with such questions.
 - d. The INTER person will most likely hesitate to ask questions or express opinions in a group situation such as a formal meeting whereas the REL person will feel comfortable being asked personal questions.
10. **As a project manager you are in charge of implementing a project in your company and are responsible for ensuring the deadline will be strictly met. You have identified that some of the team members are extremely polychronic. You are concerned as the risk of missing the deadline is high. What is most likely the most effective strategy to ensure that the project will be turned in on time while ensuring not to hurt team members feelings?**
- a. Call up the polychronic colleagues every day close to the deadline to ensure they will submit their part one time.
 - b. Explain at the beginning the importance delivering the project by the deadline AND regularly tell team members that if they don't submit their part by the deadline they won't receive any bonus this year.
 - c. Arrange regular status meetings to check progress with everyone and propose help if need be to those who could be behind AND take buffer time.
 - d. Regularly ask team members if everything is OK / on track.

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In-class test 5/8

11. How would an **EXTREMELY DIRECT** person most likely perceive a counterpart who is **EXTREMELY INDIRECT**
 - a. As confusing and hiding something from me
 - b. As efficient
 - c. As a fast person
 - d. As very polite.
12. Which one of the following situations is an example of high context communication (i.e. implicit communication)?
 - a. Not verbally expressing disagreement but for instance frowning or shrugging shoulders
 - b. Instead of telling your counterpart your feelings, using a metaphor to express them
 - c. Assigning guests as well as the manager and lower-level employees of the host company specific seats around the negotiation table to convey their roles and importance
 - d. All of the above.
13. A **VERY** relationship-oriented person wants to build rapport with other **EXTREMELY** task-oriented team members located in the same office. Which of the following strategies is the most efficient one he/she should use?
 - a. Go and say hello to everyone individually as soon as he/she arrives in the office.
 - b. Go chit-chat with other team members at least once a day during work time in the company kitchen or at the coffee machine.
 - c. Regularly ask other team members when they could plan in their agenda lunch with him/her and send them an electronic invite once the date and time have been agreed upon.
 - d. All of the above.
14. Which of the dimensions below is the best one in order to achieve maximum efficiency when leading a cc team?
 - a. Egalitarian-oriented
 - b. Relationship-oriented
 - c. Independent
 - d. There is no best dimension per say.

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In-class test 6/8

15. What do you need to do in order to avoid falling into the “MIS” factor?
 - a. Be open-minded.
 - b. Observe first then analyze people's behaviors from a cross-cultural perspective.
 - c. Display a flexible behavior
 - d. Learn more than one foreign language.
16. What dimension is represented in the sentence below?

In a meeting, A speaks to B: “You suggested a creative idea, but I disagree with you, it won't work for our project”.

 - a. Very direct
 - b. Very indirect
 - c. Very low context (explicit)
 - d. Very high context (implicit)
17. In the paragraph below, what dimension could the behavior of the two colleagues most likely express?

Amina and Antonio are two colleagues of an international team of seven. They both have IT responsibilities across geographies. All the members are located in a different country so that everyone mostly collaborates through online meetings, online messaging, and emails. Today, Amina and Antonio are having a conference call with the marketing department for an important project. The marketing colleagues are making requests and pushing for solutions that they both disagree with as they know it won't be technically feasible and will create lots of difficulties for the IT department and other colleagues in the team. However, they mostly remain silent, merely asking questions and taking notes.

 - a. Egalitarian
 - b. Interdependent
 - c. High context
 - d. Task-oriented

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In-class test 7/8

18. In the situation below, what dimensions could most certainly explain both Olivier Martin's attitude and Emmanuel's reaction?

Olivier Martin is a French marketing director in charge of a team of four. Emmanuel, one of the four team members, specializes in product development including new technology. He has come up with a detailed analysis of the market and a comprehensive program he is eager to promote. But the project has first to be accepted by the steering committee before any launch can be done. Convinced his solid research will ensure the success of his proposal, Emmanuel is very excited at the idea of presenting his project to the higher-ups. But Olivier Martin, his manager, tells him that he is a member of the steering committee. As a consequence, he, Olivier, will present the project in person to the steering committee. Emmanuel is furious and feels down at the same time.

- a. Olivier is interdependent while Emmanuel is independent.
- b. Olivier is certainty-oriented while Emmanuel is more risk-oriented.
- c. Olivier is status while Emmanuel is more egalitarian.
- d. Olivier is task-oriented while Emmanuel is more relationship-oriented.

19. When giving instructions to team-members, what is the BEST style the team manager should use?

- a. Low context
- b. Certainty-oriented
- c. Direct
- d. Task-oriented

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In-class test 8/8

20. You know a foreigner who works in a local company. He arrived recently to your country of origin and has difficulties blending in. He complains a lot about the inefficiency of his colleagues and about the local work style. He often feels irritated. What strategy would most likely be the most efficient one in the short run to overcome his difficulties?

- a. Go back to his country of origin.
- b. Identify the main cultural reasons for his problems and adapt his behavior to the local norms, values, beliefs and cultural dimensions.
- c. Find a way to push his colleagues to learn about and adapt to his own work style.
- d. Do nothing, just be patient. Over time, when he will understand more about the country, things will calm down, and he will certainly feel better.

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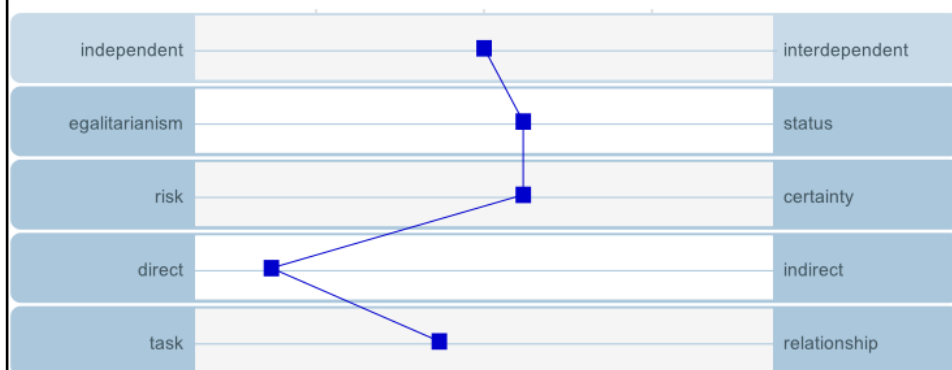
French business culture

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Homework #4 (con't) - France's GlobeSmart™ profile



NB: Please keep in mind that the French:

- 1/ Tend to become **very direct when voicing negative feedback** (i.e. criticism) face-to-face or over the phone
- 2/ But are much more indirect in other circumstances.

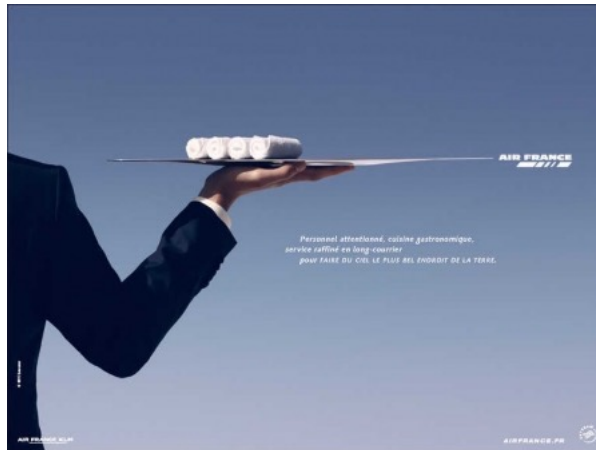
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An Air France advertisement

What are the French core values at play here?



TEXT

Considerate staff,
gourmet food,
exquisite service on
long-distance flights

Making the sky the
most beautiful place
on earth.

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Lufthansa ad

TEXT

Checking-in while on the go.

Receiving one's boarding
card electronically on one's
mobile phone, without
printing paper

Enjoying the most important
thing, time.

Everything for the moment.

Von unterwegs mobil einchecken.
Die Bordkarte papierlos per Handy empfangen.
Um das Wichtigste zu nutzen, nämlich Zeit.
Alles für diesen Moment.

Jetzt die Mobile Boardingkarte ausprobieren. Einfach Code mit dem QR Reader des Handys abscannen oder eine SMS mit "Lufthansa" an "134567890" senden. Mehr Informationen unter lufthansa.com

Reisen wird jetzt noch flexibler. Mit dem eFly Services mobil buchen, einchecken und Ihren Sitzplatz direkt auf dem Handy auswählen. Mehr Informationen unter lufthansa.com

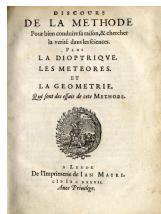
There's no better way to fly. **Lufthansa**
A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

Cross-Bo

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The French mindset

- ✧ Cartesian passion for classification and definition
 - Driven more by concepts/theory than by pragmatism
 - Praise and reward for demonstrating an intellectual attitude
 - High degree of **logical** (deductive) reasoning and **analysis**
- ✧ Logic and reasoning developed by the Enlightenment thinkers (18th century)
 - Philosophers such as Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Diderot.



René Descartes' most famous book:
***Discourse on the Method* (1637)**
-> *Je pense donc je suis.* (I think, therefore I am.)
-> Reasoning helps to get out of difficult situations.



René Descartes
(1596-1650)
Mathematician and philosopher

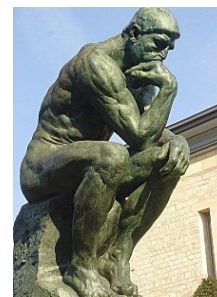
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Homework #4 (con't) - French thinking style

- ✧ Thinking is key in French education
 - Value of ideas and thoughts
 - Reasoning backed by knowledge/facts
 - Nicolas Boileau (1636-1711), a French poet and critic:
 - « Ce que l'on conçoit bien s'énonce clairement
et les mots pour le dire arrivent aisément. »*
- * What is well-conceived is expressed clearly, and the words to say it come easily.
- ✧ At school, the French are taught to develop "l'esprit critique".
 - Compulsory philosophy class in the last year of high school
 - In essays (thèse – anti-thèse – conclusion -> solution)



Le Penseur
(the Thinker),
modelled in 1880-1882
by famous French
sculptor Auguste
Rodin

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6.1. Case study debriefing – An American in Paris

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Case study analysis – Key character analysis

	Philippe	Sophie	French administration	Dan
Independent-interdependent	?	?	?	Independent
Egalitarian-status	Mostl likely somewhat status	Status	?	Egalitarian
Risk-certainty	?	?	Certainty	Risk
Direct-indirect	Direct (only when criticizing)	?	?	Direct
High-low context	High context	High context	?	Low context
Task-relationship	Relationship	?	?	Task
Monochronic-polychronic	Polychronic	?	Certainly polychronic	Monochronic

- Please cite one or several relevant sentences or phrases from the case study as a proof to state that a character has the cultural orientation dimension per dimension that you will have mentioned in the chart like the one above.
- When you don't have information or not enough information to make a definitive choice on a character's positioning on a cultural dimension, **say so**. Explain briefly what you know.
- Bullet points answers are perfectly fine so as to save time

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Case study (con't) – Example of an adequate answer

- ✂ Dan perceives himself as a problem-solver whereas Sophie sees her manager as an expert (status orientation). According to Laurent (1983), French managers are often perceived as not deserving their position if they are not able to give clear answers to everyday questions.
- ✂ Dan on the opposite is convinced that it is because he will ask specific questions that he will stimulate Sophie's creativity and sense of initiative (egalitarian orientation).
- ✂ Dan does behave like an expert—what she expects from him—. Sophie therefore interprets this attitude as incompetence. As a consequence, she moves away from him and makes him understand that she has lost respect for him because he does not seem to be able to fulfill his role as an expert. This explains Sophie's attitude towards work: coming in late, having protracted, lingering coffee breaks etc.
- ✂ **NB: Important! When analyzing a case study, you need to cite excerpts from the case study that illustrate your viewpoint (on dimensions or core values)**

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Case study: *An American in Paris* (con't)

4/ France and USA core values at play (if possible)

- ⌘ France's core values =>
- ⌘ USA core values =>

5/ Recommendations

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6.2. Working efficiently at a distance

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Reminder – Homework – Email

Subject: Time Sensitive: Feedback Needed

Hi Stéphanie,

Happy New Year! I hope you had a wonderful holiday season.

Would you mind taking a look at the attached PowerPoint slides for the meeting on Thursday? Please note the following:

1. **Slide 3:** Company Organization Chart – graphic might need to be modified to reflect recent changes
2. **Slide 5:** New Picture Added – feel free to replace, if needed.

We would also like an outline of the main points. Let me know if you have any questions or if there is anything else we missed. We would need your input by the *end of the day tomorrow*, if possible.

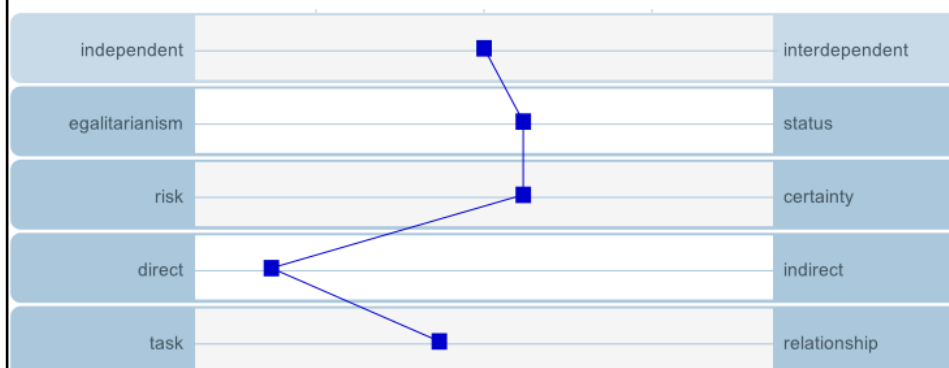
Thank you!
Yoichi

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France's GlobeSmart™ profile



NB: Please keep in mind that the French:

- 1/ Tend to become **very direct when voicing negative feedback** (i.e. criticism) face-to-face or over the phone
- 2/ But are much more indirect in other circumstances.

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A few of your emails - #1

Bonjour Stephanie,

I would like you to look at the attached Powerpoint slides from the meeting on Thursday. Please note the following,

1. Slide 3: Company organization chart - Kindly modify the graphics to reflect recent changes.
2. Slide 5: New picture added - Please replace the picture if needed.

Please provide outline of the main points discussed during the meeting. Let me know if you have any questions.

Send your input by end of the day tomorrow. I'll wait to hear from you.

Regards,

Juanita Hering

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A few of your emails - #2

Subject: Re-Time Sensitive: Feedback Needed

Hello Stéphanie,

Could you please look at the attached PowerPoint slides for the Thursday meeting?

- The organizational chart 'graph' might need some update on slide number three.
- Slide number five, perhaps adding a new picture.
- We will discuss further the main outline points on Thursday.

If possible, could you please outline of the main point and send your input before the 21st of January 17h30.

I remain available should you have any questions.

Thank you,

Kind regards,

Junita Hering

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A few of your emails - #3

Subject: PowerPoint slides have been updated for the upcoming meeting.

Bonjour Stephanie,

I hope doing well. A very happy new year to you! Hoping you had a wonderful holiday season.

1. Slide 3: At Company Organization Chart –It is better to do some modification in the graphic which reflect recent changes.
2. Slide 5: New Picture Added –If you have a better replacement on this, feel free to replace.

A summary of the main points would also be helpful. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if anything else needs to be addressed.

By the end of tomorrow, we would like to hear your input on how we can improve the presentation.

Have a good day!

Thank you!

Juanita Hering

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A few of your emails - #4

Subject: Changes for PowerPoint Slide for the upcoming meeting.

Bonjour Stéphanie,

How are you? Happy New Year! I hope you had a wonderful holiday season.

Would you mind looking at the attached PowerPoint slides for the meeting on Thursday? Please consider the following points:

1. Slide 3: At Company Organization Chart – It is better to do some modification in the graphic which reflect recent changes.
2. Slide 5: New Picture Added – If you have a better replacement on this, feel free to replace.

We would also like an outline of the main points. Let me know if you have any questions or if there is anything else we missed.

We would need your input by the end of the day tomorrow, it will be more helpful to improve the presentation.

Have a good day!

Thank you!

Juanita Hering

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A few of your emails - #5

Subject: Time Sensitive: Feedback Needed

Bonjour Stephanie,

Happy new year! I hope you had a wonderful holiday season.

it would be a big help if you look at the attached PowerPoint slides for meeting on Thursday. make sure that in slide 3 - company Organization Chart - graphics might need to be modified according to recent changes and in Slide 5 feel free to do some replacements of pictures or some modifications.

It is imperative to have outline flow of main points in summary , so it would be appreciated. Ping me if you have any question or if there is anything else we missed. We would need your input by the end of the day tomorrow, if possible.

Thank you

Juanita Hering

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A few of your emails - #6

Bonsoir Stephanie,

Greetings from this side, wishing you a very Happy New Year. I hope you are well and had a wonderful holiday season.

I would like your feedback on the attached PowerPoint slides for the meeting which would occur on the coming Thursday. Herewith, I am attaching the below points to refer for the same:

Slide 3: Company Organization Chart - I have created some graphics, but I think I could use your help to improvise them to reflect recent changes.

Slide 5: New Picture Added - I am skeptical about the new picture and would prefer for you to replace it if you feel so.

We would appreciate it if we can get an outline of the main points from your end as it would help us summarize the presentation. Please revert back to me by today if you have any questions as we would require your assisted input by the end of the day tomorrow.

Merci,

Juanita Hering

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Sample effective email to a French counterpart

Subject: Feedback Needed on PPT Slides by Friday January 8th - Urgent

Bonjour Antoine / Monsieur Dujardin / bonjour Monsieur,

Happy New Year! I hope you had a wonderful holiday season. I tried to reach you over the phone but you were out of the office. I need your help for our meeting on Thursday. Would you mind having a look at the attached PowerPoint slides?

1. **Slide 3:** New Company Organization Chart -> please check the graphic and the accuracy of the information
2. **Slide 5:** Picture -> please validate it or recommend a better one.

We would also like a detailed outline of the main points of this presentation.

My schedule is pretty flexible today and tomorrow for a phone conversation to discuss the project in more detail. We will need your feedback and input by tomorrow 7.00 pm.

Thank you for your time!

Cordialement,

Juanita Herning

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Email writing tips (whatever the target culture)

✂ Before you send an e-mail

- Decide if e-mail is the best means of communication for what you are trying to accomplish.
- Communicating by email is common for initial introductions and ideal after the introduction is made as well as an effective tool to follow up after a meeting (in person or virtual), sharing information or maintaining a relationship.
- In some cases, a phone call is a better option than an e-mail.

✂ If you are to send an e-mail, consider the following guidelines when communicating with someone who has Task and Low Context orientation.

- Structure your e-mail using bullet points, numbers, short paragraphs and questions
- Be detailed and specific, keep sentences short
- Provide reasonable and explicit timeframe for a response
- Consider task/relationship needs of recipient
- Focus – provide quick answers and solutions
- Summarize a list of next steps or actions

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Email orientation to a French team-member

- ✧ Start with a **short relationship-oriented introduction** (1 to 2 lines)
 - For ex: « Hi Pierre, I hope this email finds you well and that you are enjoying being part of our international team. »
- ✧ **Give a short context** in the beginning with specific facts or perceptions
- ✧ Mix the 'I' (**independent orientation**) as the writer of the email (who takes the initiative of writing it) with the 'we' (the project, the team) who are concerned with the difficulties resulting from the French team member (**face-saving**)
- ✧ No finger-pointing (see above comment) -> Choose a mid high-context approach
 - 'It seems to me that...' 'The team-members have voiced concerns....' etc. – Friendly tone!
 - But still ensure the clarity of the message.
- ✧ Suggest a debrief discussion over the phone as it will clarify the situation (why the person is not doing his/her job) and satisfy the rather relationship-oriented French.
- ✧ **Keep the email rather short** (1 screen, readable page max)

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Analyzing an email from a cross-cultural standpoint Possible orientations

For relationship-oriented, interdependent, indirect/high context cultures

- ✧ Problem is a « We » issue - no finger pointing
- ✧ Relation focus is high
- ✧ Feedback to be delivered in higher context mode
- ✧ Indirect / implicit language
- ✧ Face saving important

For task-oriented, independent, direct/low context cultures

- ✧ 'I' have a problem with 'you' issue
- ✧ Task focus is high
- ✧ Feedback delivered within the email message
- ✧ Direct/explicit language
- ✧ Clarity important

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Wrap-up: Best practices from the CBM class

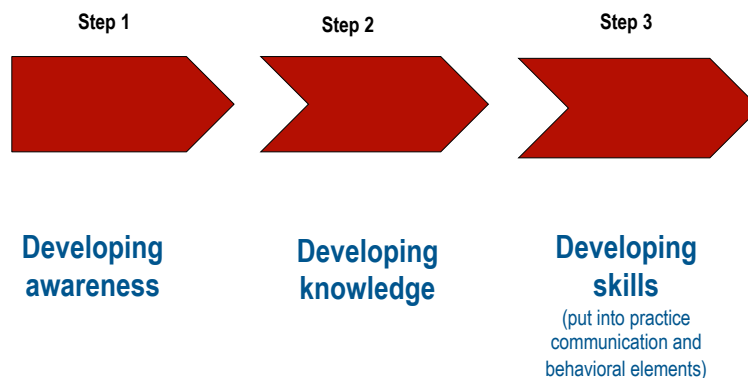
- ✂ **Use the dimensions** of your toolbox as the first step
 - Look at the positioning of the country of origin of your counterpart
 - Check if the person is aligned or not to the country's positioning (what could be the factors influencing a divergence?)
- ✂ **Adapt your communication style**
 - **Style switch** (or use one of the other three strategies) with your key stakeholders to ease out communication and to connect more quickly
 - Decide on a **communication strategy** with your key stakeholders
- ✂ Do not take anything for granted, always **explore, ask questions and be curious about the other person's needs and culture**
 - Observe and ask questions to better understand the situation / the person
- ✂ Do **background research** on the culture of your major stakeholders
 - What are the key values of this country?
- ✂ **Be patient** and do not jump **into judgements** right away
- ✂ Always start with the idea that your counterpart displays **goodwill**.
- ✂ In a multicultural team
 - Make sure to **have all voices heard**
 - **Connect** even distantly with other team-members and **develop rapport**
- ✂ As a team-leader, make sure to **communicate instructions both directly and in a low-context** format to avoid any misunderstandings/ any wrong interpretation.

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Cross-cultural learning process



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