

# Epita Cross-Border Management Class

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# Cross-border Management

## Fourth class

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## Homework for class #4

- ⌘ Time dimension (monochronic to polychronic)
  - Think of a personal experience related to your home country, France, or any other country that you know that describes one end or the other of this dimension.
  - Read the situation described in the following slide and reflect on alternative solutions. Come to class prepared with a list of concrete ideas.
- ⌘ Read the following three situations and decide what dimension(s) is/are at play.
- ⌘ Watch the following Youtube video on how to work with the French (10 tips):
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pxyuby8ULu8>
- ⌘ Case study (attached to the email)
  - Read *An American In Paris* for class #4.
  - Start analyzing the positioning of the French major characters (or national culture if referring to a group of people from the same country) on all 7 dimensions that we studied. **Give evidence (short excerpts) from the case study to support your position.**
  - We will study the whole case study in more detail in class #5.

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## Homework for class #4 – Make recommendations

- ⌘ An international body based in Geneva, Switzerland, organizes a symposium that will welcome high-level delegations from all over the world and will spread over three days. In total, hundreds of participants are expected from dozens of countries. Every day, there will be a keynote speaker in the main amphitheater of the venue with the entire audience followed by workshops run in parallel in several rooms. Lunch will be organized on the spot as a way for the delegates to network. In the morning and the afternoon, additional networking sessions will be offered in-between conferences (so-called coffee breaks).
- ⌘ The organizing committee, being very monochronic, is very concerned about the time line and abiding by the schedule. Several voices already voiced their concerns about the two African delegations as the African continent has the reputation of having a relaxed attitude towards time. The organizing committee therefore decides to send the invitation to the African delegations moving forward the start of the symposium by one day to ensure that they will be on time for the beginning of the symposium. In the meantime, the African delegations have 'done their homework' knowing that deadlines are taken very seriously in Switzerland. They therefore booked their flights and hotels and made sure to arrive at the exact specified time and date. They are extremely surprised to notice that nobody is there at the venue, neither other delegates nor the organizing committee. They cannot even register early and get their badges. They are consequently very disappointed about the organization and decide to file a complaint.
- ⌘ The strategy used by the organizing committee obviously was a bad one. Reflect on what should/could have been done instead to prevent a loss of face on the African delegates' side and still ensuring that they will arrive before the start of the sessions. Come up with specific and very concrete ideas.

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## Symposium in Geneva - Recommendations

- ✂ Have staff liaising regularly with the delegations of group of countries (more and more regularly close to the event, let's say two weeks in advance, one week, then two days), reminding them of the agenda, and checking on their flights (no change)
- ✂ Stress the quality of the venue, guests and speakers (so as to motivate the delegates not to miss any part of the event)
- ✂ Send in advance a list of recommended hotels with negotiated prices (so as to control their traveling in Geneva)
- ✂ Organize shuttle buses at the arrival based on the flight schedule mentioned – From airport to hotel and during the symposium from hotel to the symposium in the morning and at the end of the day
- ✂ Entice the delegates to arrive early by organizing a nice breakfast before the beginning of the event and distribute welcome gifts
- ✂ Start the symposium with an African or famous keynote speaker the delegates would want to see / be associated with so as to entice them to come from the very beginning
- ✂ Clearly mention the doors will be closed after the start of each conference and will reopen only at the end, before the next one.
- ✂ Any other suggestion?

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## Homework for class #4 – Situation 2

- ✂ A coachee is writing a short message to his/her professional coach. It's a Saturday before the coaching appointment due on the next Monday afternoon. The coachee works in the professional makeup field (for artists).
- ✂ The "Hello xx, I have just had a job offer. Could we talk about it ?"
- ✂ What dimension is at play here? What is the message?



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## Homework for class #4 – Situation 3

- ✂ Mr. Yamada is a manager in a Japanese company based in Osaka. He heads a team of five. Everyone in the team usually prepares and hands over a report to Mr. Yamada. The manager compiles and sends the report the first day of the month to the finance department. Individual reports have not yet been passed onto Mr. Yamada.
- ✂ Mr. Yamada talks to his team members in this way: "Suzuki-san has not yet asked for the monthly report. I wonder when he will do so."
- ✂ If you were one of Mr. Yamada's team members, what would you have understood? What would you do?
- ✂ What dimension is at play here?



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## Video learning: *A World of Difference*



- ✂ The company Morel plans to launch a new accounting software around the world. This is the first bi-monthly meeting in Rome of the international team working on this project. It is headed by Gavin Hales, based in London.
  - What do you foresee will be the outcome of this meeting and why?
  - What are the reasons for the unease? (or else said what are the issues at stake?)

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## DVD analysis – A World of Difference

### Questions



1/ OBSERVE - Write down the **exact wording** and report the **body language** of a few participants

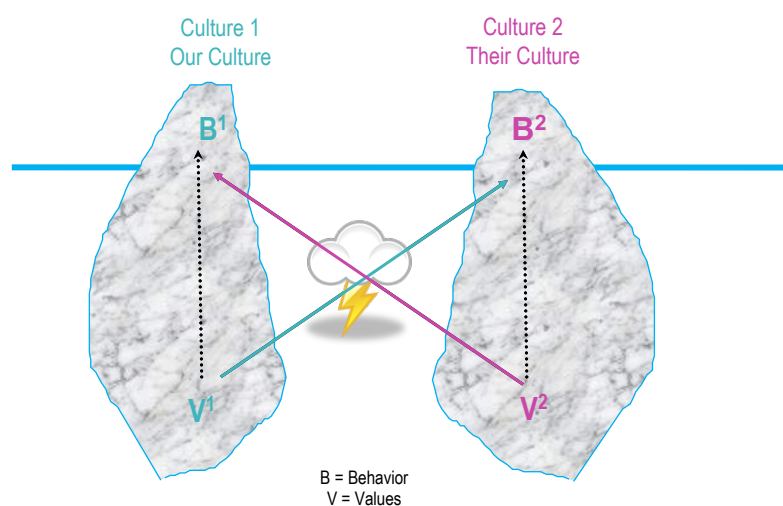
2/ ANALYZE - Find out the value behind them **THEN** dimensions and possible national core values.

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## Reminder - Iceberg model



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## The MIS factor

- ⌘ Not seeing or hearing things as they were intended (**MIS**perception) – often because we see and hear what we want to see and hear
- ⌘ Interpreting or making sense of this behavior using our own cultural filters not theirs (**MIS**interpretation)
- ⌘ Evaluating our interpretation of their behavior as negative, according to our own beliefs and values (**MIS**evaluation)
- ⌘ Mistrusting others because of our negative evaluation (**MIS**trust)
- ⌘ This, in turn, leads to looking and listening for confirmation of our own negative impressions in their later behavior.
- ⌘ And the cycle continues...

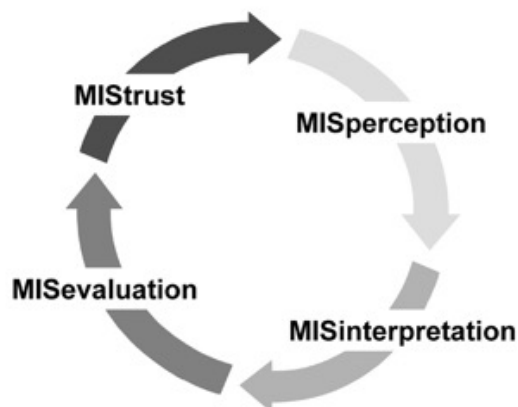
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## The MIS factor

Cross-cultural breakdowns often occur because of a vicious circle of:



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# French culture in action

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## France's GlobeSmart® profile

|                |  |                |
|----------------|--|----------------|
| independent    |  | interdependent |
| egalitarianism |  | status         |
| risk           |  | certainty      |
| direct         |  | indirect       |
| task           |  | relationship   |

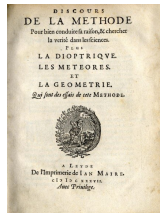
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## Homework #1 - The French mindset

Please read

- ✂ 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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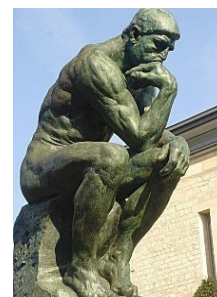
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## Homework #1.2 - French thinking style

Please read

- ✂ 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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## Homework #1.3 - French communication style

Please read

### ⌘ Love for debate

- Enjoy a good argument and do not avoid **verbal confrontation**
- Enjoy challenging another person's line of thinking and will argue at length to convince you of their position
- **Heated** discussions may even arise between friends - **Strong expression of emotions**



### ⌘ "No" may not mean "no".

- Is the person asking you to convince him/her of the value of your idea?
- Present a logical argument to convince your boss/colleague -> The "no" may eventually become a "yes."
- But the French tend to be **very direct (and negative) when expressing criticism.**

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## Homework #2 - Case study assignment

- ⌘ Analyze thoroughly *An American in Paris* case study.
  - Display an analytical approach.
- ⌘ Prepare recommendations in writing (bullet points) to the case study and bring this preparation to class #5.

### Instructions

- ⌘ Please follow the methodology how to go about a cross-cultural case study (document enclosed)
- ⌘ At your Master 2 level, I expect **high-level** recommendations. Be creative!

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## Homework #2 – Giving feedback to the French

- ✂ Tod Johnston has just been transferred from the United States, a local office, to the headquarters in France. The overall objective of the company is to increase the number of foreigners working at the headquarters to develop an international mindset. After his two first weeks, the new US manager sends an email to his five French team members as follows:

Hi team,

You have been doing a great job so far. Well done!

Thank you.

Tod

- ✂ What do you think of the impact of such a communication on French people?
- ✂ What should Tod have done differently to increase cultural efficiency?

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## Homework #3 and #4

- ✂ Watch the following video:

- Dean Foster: Doing business in France
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqnY1NoWI\\_E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqnY1NoWI_E)

- ✂ Email exercise

- Please rewrite the email written on next page with the objective to write effectively to a French counterpart (imagine it's a French colleague). In other words, practice style switching in a written format. I have enclosed France's GlobeSmart profile for your review.
- Please send me your homework by email **at the latest on Thursday June 23, 22.**

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## Homework #3 (con't) – 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!

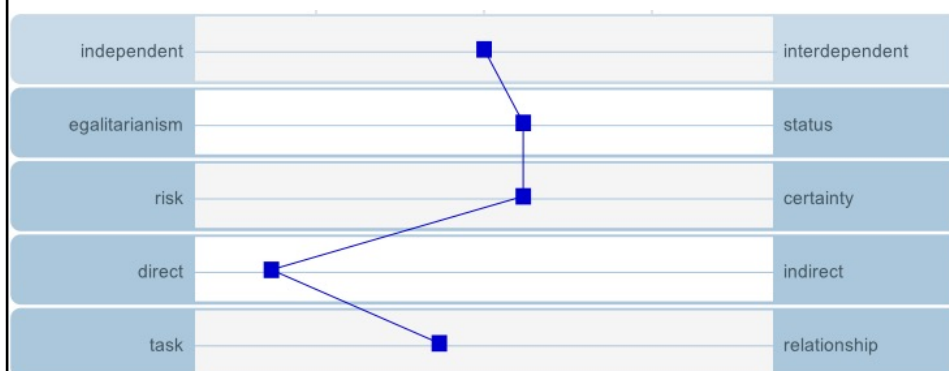
Juanita Hering

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## Homework #3 (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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## Homework #5 – Convincing the French

- ✂ Carefully read the three following slides:
  - Presenting information to the French
  - Key drivers + What to expect when convincing the French
  - French communication style.
- ✂ Prepare in writing the cultural approach for the role play described on the next page with the objective to culturally convince the French:
  - How to start the meeting, what to do and say to the French directors, how to organize your presentation etc. (Keep in mind what you would do differently from convincing someone from your home country)
  - The arguments you would use to defend your position.
  - Bring your written preparation (bullet points OK) to the next class.



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## Homework #4 (con't) - Working with the French - Role play

- ✂ You have been newly hired by a French company in France. The managing director (MD) is considering developing cross-cultural training programs for the managers dealing at the international level. He is interested hearing the benefits and drawbacks you experienced by attending a cross-border management class at EPITA. He wants to hear your feedback AND your recommendations:
  - Key concepts of the course that had an impact on you.
  - The benefits of this course on your professional and personal life
  - Any change (if any) that you would recommend to suit the company's managers
  - Any criticism that you have about the course.
- ✂ To this end, he invites you to present this topic at the company steering committee that all top French directors attend.
- ✂ **Your goal is to convince the MD** of your viewpoint (for or against such workshops for the company). You have **3 minutes** for the presentation.

**NB:** Make sure to develop a cross-cultural approach which would be different from how you would do things in your home country.

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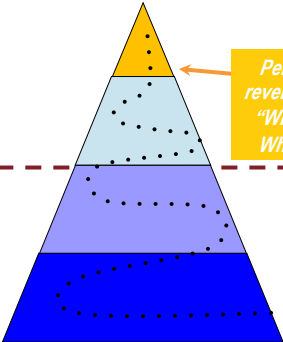
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## Homework #4 (con't) - Presenting Information

**Bullet Points**

Please read

Provide high level overview up front. If you want more information, ask questions

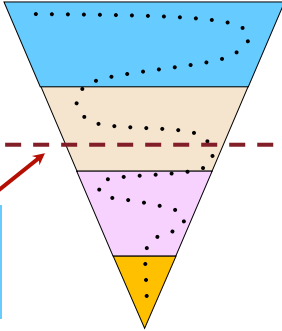


*Perception from the reversed pyramid style:  
"Where is the depth?  
Why so simplistic?"*


*Perception by the pyramid style  
"But what is your point?"*

**Background**

Solid foundation up front provides needed context for the main point



This is the French approach.



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## Homework #4 (con't) - Convincing the French

Please read

⌘ **Key drivers**

- Build a good relationship
- Start with background information and place the proposal in context
- Use both sophistication and logical arguments (facts)
- Provide details (e.g. statistics and/or financial facts), use examples

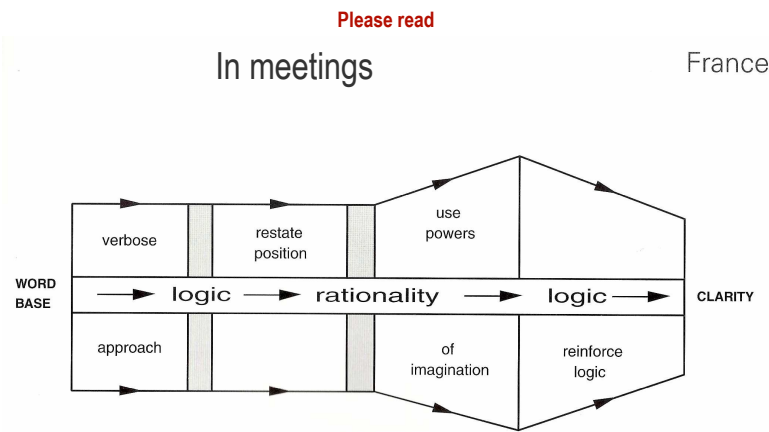
⌘ **What to expect**

- Be ready to be challenged and to defend the merits of your position
- Be ready to go through heated debates (emotions)
- Be ready to first receive negative feedback (e.g. 'It's not possible.')

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



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