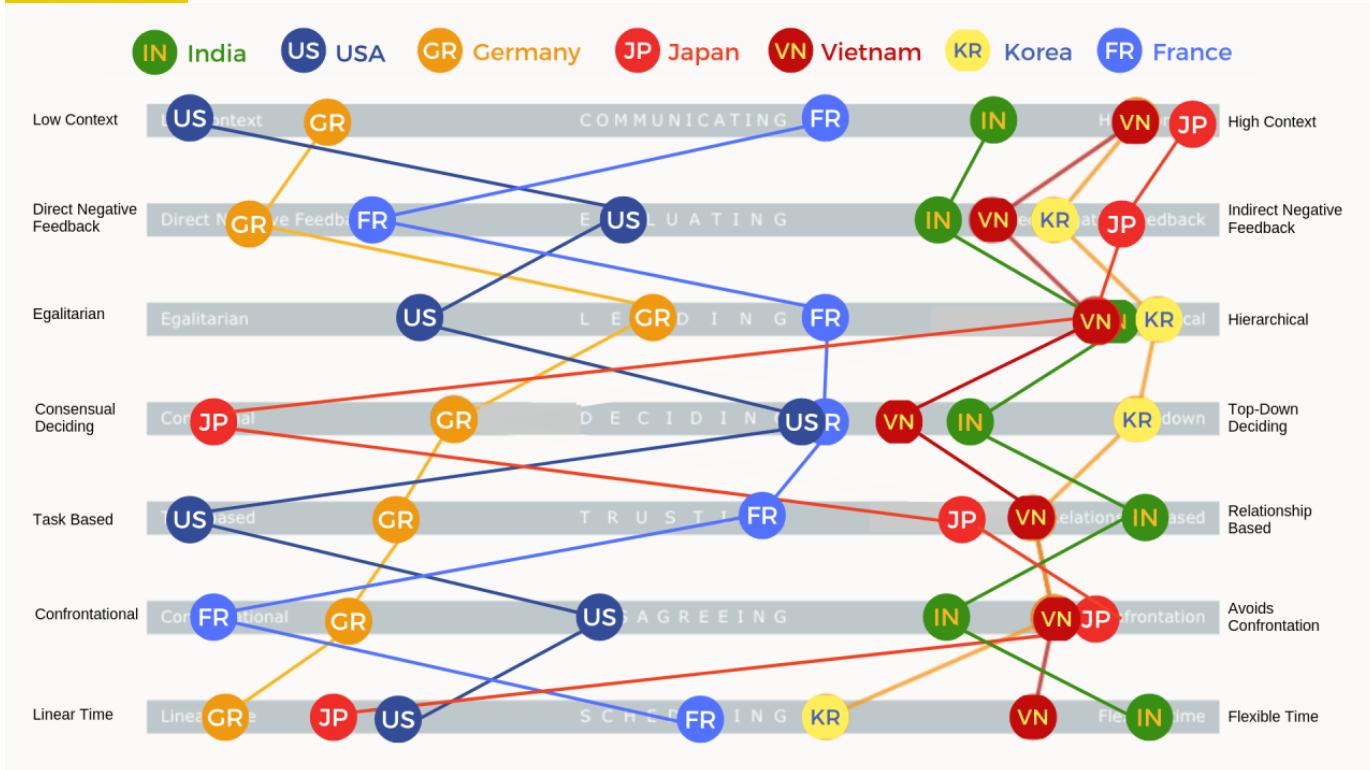
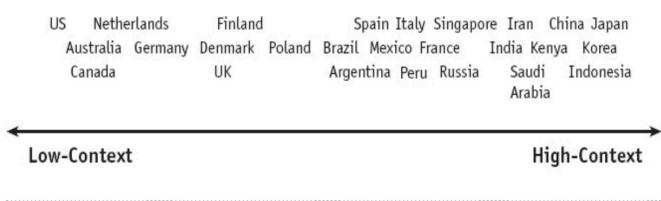


## The culture map

## Overview

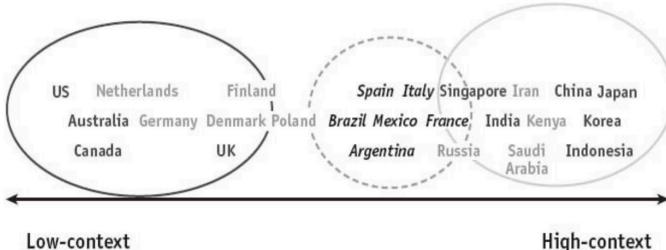


## **COMMUNICATING**



**Low-Context** Good communication is precise, simple, and clear. Messages are expressed and understood at face value. Repetition is appreciated if it helps clarify the communication.

**High-Context** Good communication is sophisticated, nuanced, and layered. Messages are both spoken and read between the lines. Messages are often implied but not plainly expressed.



What the British say	What the British mean	What the Dutch understand
With all due respect...	I think you are wrong.	He is listening to me.
Perhaps you would think about...I would suggest...	This is an order. Do it or be prepared to justify yourself.	Think about this idea and do it if you like.
Oh, by the way...	The following criticism is the purpose of this discussion.	This is not very important.
I was a bit disappointed that...	I am very upset and angry that...	It doesn't really matter.
Very interesting...	I don't like it.	He is impressed.
Could you consider some other options?	Your idea is not a good one.	He has not yet decided.
Please think about that some more.	It's a bad idea. Don't do it.	It's a good idea. Keep developing it.
I'm sure it's my fault.	It's not my fault.	It's his fault.
That is an original point of view	Your idea is stupid.	He likes my idea!

Source: Nanette Ripmeester

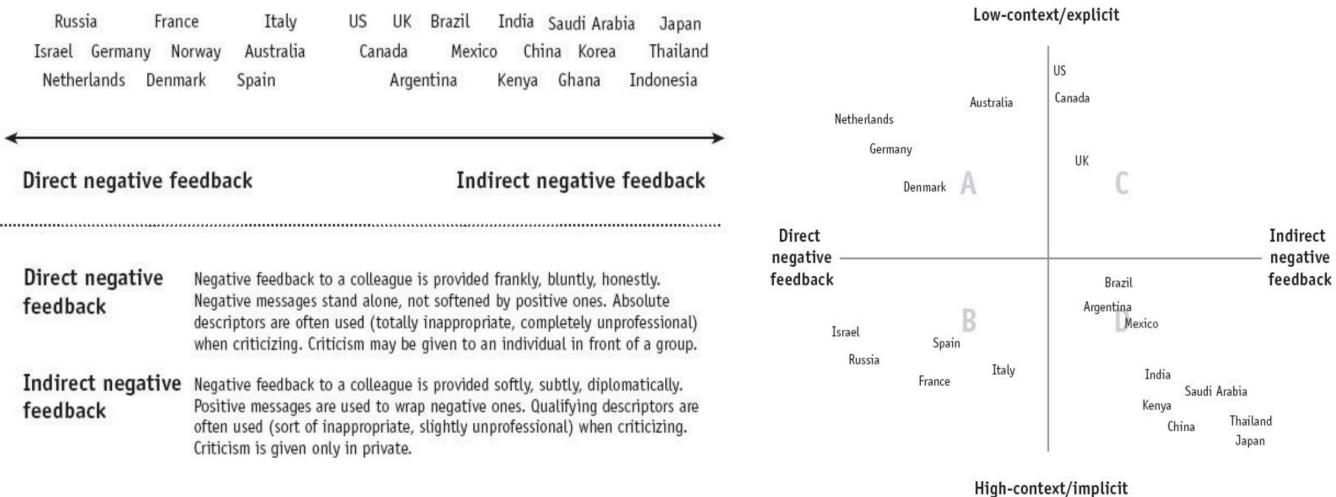
Working with people from **low-context** cultures:

- Be as transparent, clear, and specific as possible.
- Don't read between the lines, but state clear what you don't understand and ask for clarification if needed.
- At the end of the discussion, recap what was agreed on, to make sure you have the same understanding.
- Don't be extremely polite, ask as many questions as you need to understand the context.

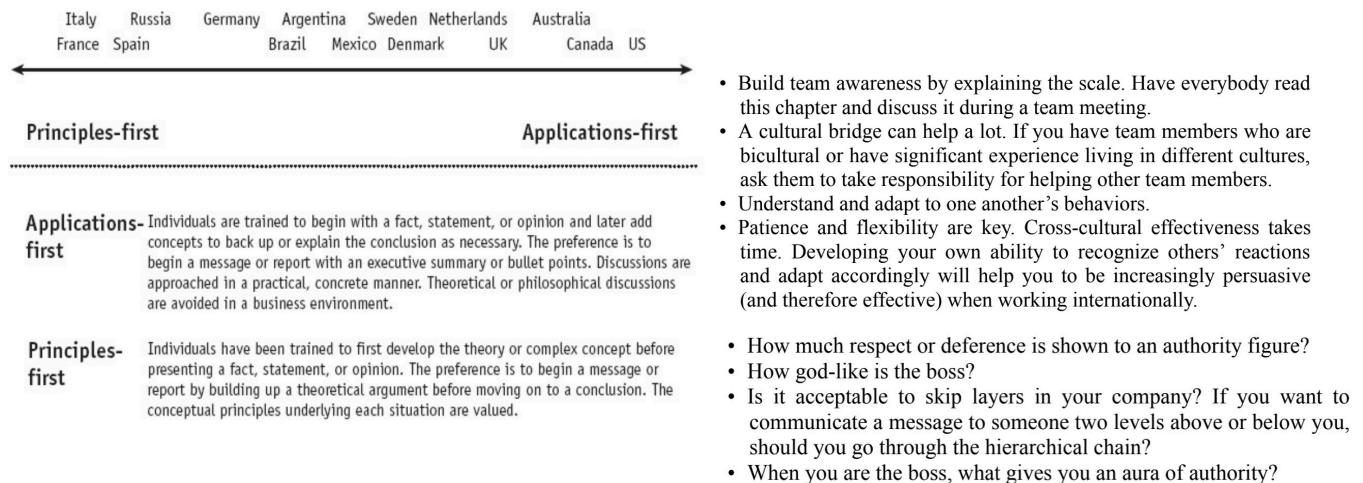
Working with people from **high-context** cultures:

- Practice listening more carefully (you need to find out what is said between the lines). Listen to what is meant, not only said.
- Pay attention to body language.
- Ask open ended questions to give the other person space (no yes or no questions).
- Clarify when you are not sure you understood the message.
- Don't assume bad-intention

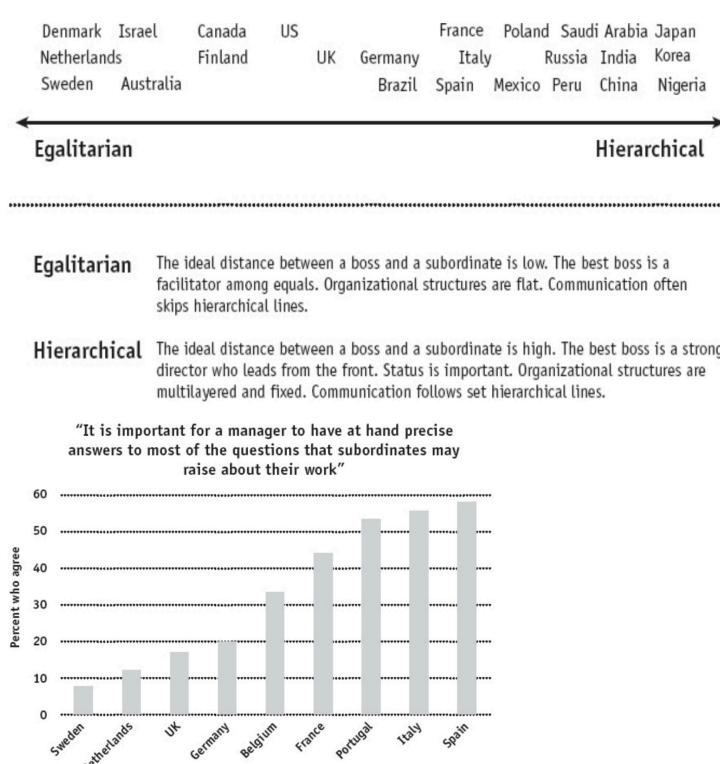
## EVALUATING



## PERSUADING



## LEADING



If you are working with people from an egalitarian society:

- Go directly to the source. No need to bother the boss.
- Think twice before copying the boss. Doing so could suggest to the recipient that you don't trust them or are trying to get them in trouble.
- Skipping hierarchical levels probably won't be a problem.
- In Scandinavia, the Netherlands, and Australia, use first names when writing e-mails. This is also largely true for the United States and the United Kingdom, although regional and circumstantial differences may arise.

- Introduce management by objectives, starting by speaking with each employee about the department's vision for the coming year and then asking them to propose their best personal annual objectives subject to negotiation and final agreement with you. In this way, you become a facilitator rather than a supervisor while still keeping a handle on what is being accomplished.
- Make sure the objectives are concrete and specific and consider linking them to bonuses or other rewards.
- Set objectives for a twelve-month period and check on progress periodically—perhaps once a month. If progress is satisfactory, you can give your subordinate more space for self-management; if progress lags, you can get more involved.

General traits of egalitarian cultures:	General traits of hierarchical cultures:
It's okay to disagree with the boss openly even in front of others.	An effort is made to defer to the boss's opinion especially in public.
People are more likely to move to action without getting the boss's okay.	People are more likely to get the boss's approval before moving to action.
If meeting with a client or supplier, there is less focus on matching hierarchical levels.	If you send your boss, they will send their boss. If your boss cancels, their boss also may not come.
It's okay to e-mail or call people several levels below or above you.	Communication follows the hierarchical chain.
With clients or partners you will be seated and spoken to in no specific order.	With clients or partners you may be seated and spoken to in order of position.

If you are working with people from a hierarchical society:

- Communicate with the person at your level. If you are the boss, go through the boss with equivalent status, or get explicit permission to hop from one level to another.
- If you do e-mail someone at a lower hierarchical level than your own, copy the boss.
- If you need to approach your boss's boss or your subordinate's subordinate, get permission from the person at the level in between first.
- When e-mailing, address the recipient by the last name unless they have indicated otherwise—for example, by signing their e-mail to you with their first name only.

he used to wonder. If you are managing a group that respects your authority so much that you are unable to get the input you need to make informed decisions, there are a few steps you can take without completely compromising the authority of your position. These strategies include:

- Ask your team to meet without you in order to brainstorm as a group—and then to report the group's ideas back to you. Removing "the boss" from the meeting removes their need to defer, allowing people to feel more comfortable sharing ideas.
- When you call a meeting, give clear instructions a few days beforehand about how you would like the meeting to work and what questions you plan to ask. Tell your team members explicitly that you will call on them for their input. In this way, they can show you respect by preparing and sharing their ideas. It also gives the team members time to organize their thoughts carefully and to check with one another before the meeting.
- If you are the boss, remember that your role is to chair the meeting. Don't expect people to jump in randomly without an invitation. Instead, invite people to speak up. Even if team members have prepared well and are ready to share their ideas, they may not volunteer unless you call on them individually. When you do so, you may be surprised to see how much they have to contribute.

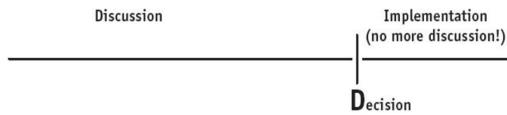
## DECIDING



**Consensual** Decisions are made in groups through unanimous agreement.

**Top-down** Decisions are made by individuals (usually the boss).

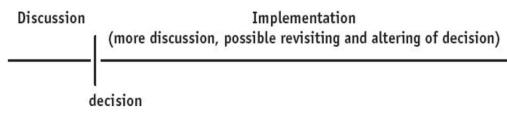
These differing styles of decision making have a dramatic impact on the timeline of a typical project. In a consensual culture, the timeline might look something like [Figure 5.1](#).



In a consensual culture, the decision making may take quite a long time, since everyone is consulted. But once the decision has been made, the implementation is quite rapid, since everyone has completely bought in and the decision is fixed and inflexible—a decision with a capital *D*, we might say. Thus, the moment of making the decision is taken quite seriously as the pivotal point in the process.

By contrast, in a top-down culture, the decision-making responsibility is invested in an individual. In this kind of culture, decisions tend to be made quickly, early in the process, by one person (likely the boss). But each decision is also flexible—a decision with a lowercase *d*. As more discussions occur, new information arises, or differing opinions surface, decisions may be easily revisited or altered. So plans are subject to continual revision—which means that implementation can take quite a long time (see [Figure 5.2](#)).

FIGURE 5.2.



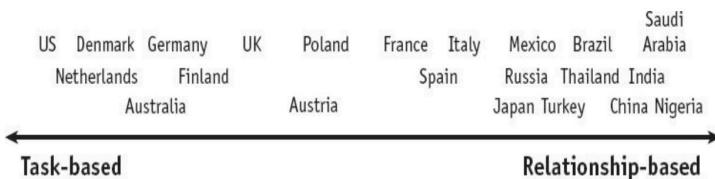
If you find yourself working with a team of people who employ a more consensual decision-making process than the one you're accustomed to, try applying the following strategies:

- Expect the decision-making process to take longer and to involve more meetings and correspondence.
- Do your best to demonstrate patience and commitment throughout the process . . . even when diverging opinions lead to seemingly interminable discussions and indecision.
- Check in with your counterparts regularly to show your commitment and be available to answer questions.
- Cultivate informal contacts within the team to help you monitor where the group is in the decision-making process. Otherwise, you may find that a consensus is forming without your awareness or participation.
- Resist the temptation to push for a quick decision. Instead, focus on the quality and completeness of the information gathered and the soundness of the reasoning process. Remember, once a decision is made, it will be difficult to try to change it.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, if you are working with a group of people who favor a more top-down approach to decision making, try using these techniques:

- Expect decisions to be made by the boss with less discussion and less soliciting of opinions than you are accustomed to. The decision may be made before, during, or after a meeting, depending on the organizational culture and the individual involved.
- Be ready to follow a decision even if your input was not solicited or was overruled. It's possible for a project to produce success even if the initial plan was not the best one that could have been devised.
- When you are in charge, solicit input and listen carefully to differing viewpoints, but strive to make decisions quickly. Otherwise you may find you are viewed as an indecisive or ineffective leader.
- When the group is divided about how to move forward and no obvious leader is present, suggest a vote. All members are expected to follow the decision supported by the majority, even if they disagree.
- Remain flexible throughout the process. Decisions are rarely set in stone; most can later be adjusted, revisited, or discussed again if necessary.

## TRUSTING



**Task-based** Trust is built through business-related activities. Work relationships are built and dropped easily, based on the practicality of the situation. You do good work consistently, you are reliable, I enjoy working with you, I trust you.

**Relationship-based** Trust is built through sharing meals, evening drinks, and visits at the coffee machine. Work relationships build up slowly over the long term. I've seen who you are at a deep level, I've shared personal time with you, I know others well who trust you, I trust you.

## DISAGREEING

Israel	Germany	Denmark	Australia	US	Sweden	India	China	Indonesia
France	Russia	Spain	Italy	UK	Brazil	Mexico	Peru	Ghana
Netherlands					Singapore	Saudi Arabia		Japan



**Confrontational** Disagreement and debate are positive for the team or organization. Open confrontation is appropriate and will not negatively impact the relationship.

**Avoids confrontation** Disagreement and debate are negative for the team or organization. Open confrontation is inappropriate and will break group harmony or negatively impact the relationship.

Basic principles for intercultural communication and negotiation. It elaborates an analysis on how different cultures (countries) express emotions, deal with confrontation, build relationships and suggests the following rules of thumbs to reach an agreement:

- **Adapt the Way You Express Disagreement**
- **Know When to Bottle It Up or Let It All Pour Out**
- **Learn how the other culture build trust**
- **Avoid Yes-or-No Questions – Look for Cultural Bridge-**
- **Be Careful About Putting It in Writing**

**• Adapt the way you express disagreement:**

In the way your counterpart speaks, you can identify what linguistics experts call “upgraders” and “downgraders.” Upgraders are words you might use to strengthen your disagreement, such as “totally,” “completely,” “absolutely.” Downgraders—such as “partially,” “a little bit,” “maybe”—soften the disagreement. You can identify them and adapt your wording and reactions accordingly.

**• Know When to Bottle It Up or Let It All Pour Out.**

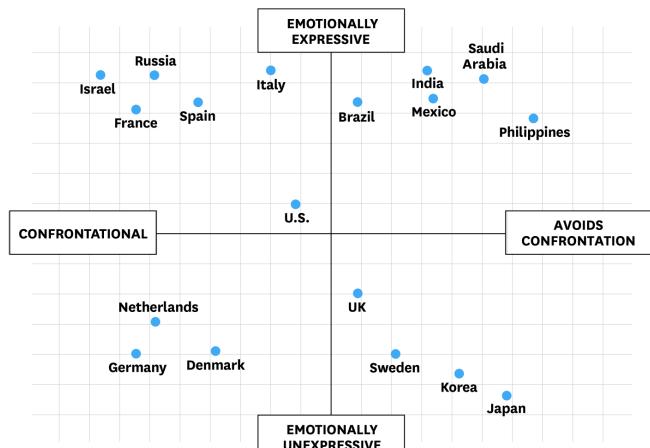
Identify what an emotional outpouring (whether yours or theirs) signifies in the culture you are negotiating with, and to adapt your reaction accordingly. The author does not point out any strategy, I suggest to prepare in beforehand. Use other decision making situations (restaurant, an informal game, art) identify the behavior of your counterpart.

**• Avoid Yes-or-not questions:**

At some point during your negotiation you'll need to put a proposal on the table—and at that moment you will expect to hear whether or not the other side accepts. The author suggests to find a “Cultural bridge”, people with both cultures and someone who knows the other culture intimately and make sure this person is going to work well, asking him directly and the counterpart on the negotiation. Another strategy is to change the yes/no questions. Rather than “Will you do this?” try “How long would it take you to get this done?” and make sure that the answer is underpinned with numbers, real evidence and facts. Put special attention on the indirect communication. Even if the response is affirmative, something may feel like no: an extra beat of silence, a strong sucking in of the breath, a muttered “I will try, but it will be difficult.” If so, the deal is probably not sealed. You may well have more

### Preparing to Face Your Counterpart

The map below sorts nationalities according to how confrontational and emotionally expressive they are. Although negotiators often believe that the two characteristics go hand in hand, that's not always the case.



**• Learn how the other culture build trust:**

During a negotiation, both parties are explicitly considering whether the deal will benefit their own business and implicitly trying to assess whether they can trust each other. Researches divide trust in two categories: cognitive and affective. Cognitive trust is based on the confidence you feel in someone's accomplishments, skills, and reliability. This trust comes from the head. Affective trust arises from feelings of emotional closeness, empathy, or friendship. It comes from the heart. We laugh together, relax together, and see each other on a personal level, so I feel empathy for you, then I can trust you. In many cultures, a deal of trust can be made only after an affective connection has been made (while sharing a meal, coffee, sport, whatever). In other cultures, an affective connection is not needed.

**• Be careful about putting it in to writing:**

Some countries rely heavily on written contract. As soon as two parties have agreed on the price and details, long documents outlining what will happen if the deal is not kept, and requiring signatures, are exchanged. These contracts are legally binding and make it easy to do business with people we otherwise have no reason to trust. But in countries where the legal system is traditionally less reliable, and relationships carry more weight in business, written contracts are less frequent. In these countries they are often a commitment to do business but may not be legally binding. Therefore they're less detailed and less important. Also, in many high-growth markets where the business environment is rapidly evolving, such as China and Indonesia, successful businesspeople must be much more flexible than is necessary (or desirable) in the West. In these cultures, a contract marks the beginning of a relationship, but it is understood that as the situation changes, the details of the agreement will also change.

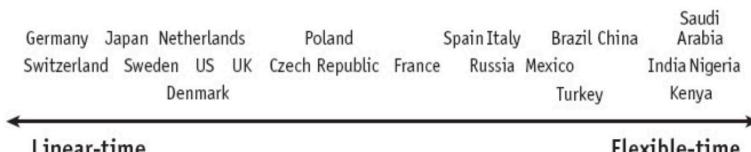
It also mention basic principles of negotiation:

- **Separate people from the problem**
- **Focus on interests, not on positions.**
- **Define your BATNA and EATNA.**
- **BATNA stands for Best Alternative To Negotiate an Agreement, this is an existing alternative. EATNA stands for Estimated Alternative To Negotiate an Agreement, it does not exist but is an estimate (Spangler 2012). In both cases keep them inside yourself, not showing them to the counterpart.**

Finally, the author suggest to always put on top universal rules to negotiate a deal:

- **You need to persuade and react**
- **To convince and finesse**
- **Pushing your points while working carefully toward an agreement.**

## SCHEDULING



**Linear-time** Project steps are approached in a sequential fashion, completing one task before beginning the next. One thing at a time. No interruptions. The focus is on the deadline and sticking to the schedule. Emphasis is on promptness and good organization over flexibility.

**Flexible-time** Project steps are approached in a fluid manner, changing tasks as opportunities arise. Many things are dealt with at once and interruptions accepted. The focus is on adaptability, and flexibility is valued over organization.

