

CAREERS & MANAGEMENT – CAM  
OPTION LEADERSHIP – M1 S8  
MODULE 1 – CONFLICT MANAGEMENT  
CLASS 3 – CULTURAL MANAGEMENT  
2024-2025

# International Teams

Culturally diverse teams are composed of members from different countries who will likely bring varied cultural values to the team.

## The Double-Edged Sword of Cultural Diversity

- Members in more culturally diverse teams have *more conflict* between one another and typically *feel less socially integrated*
- BUT: Increased cultural diversity can lead to increased team *creativity* and more *satisfied members*

## Culturally Diverse Teams Struggle Most When They:

- Are performing *tasks that are more complex*
- Have members who *work more face-to-face* rather than virtually
- Are *larger* rather than smaller
- Have members who *work together more often*

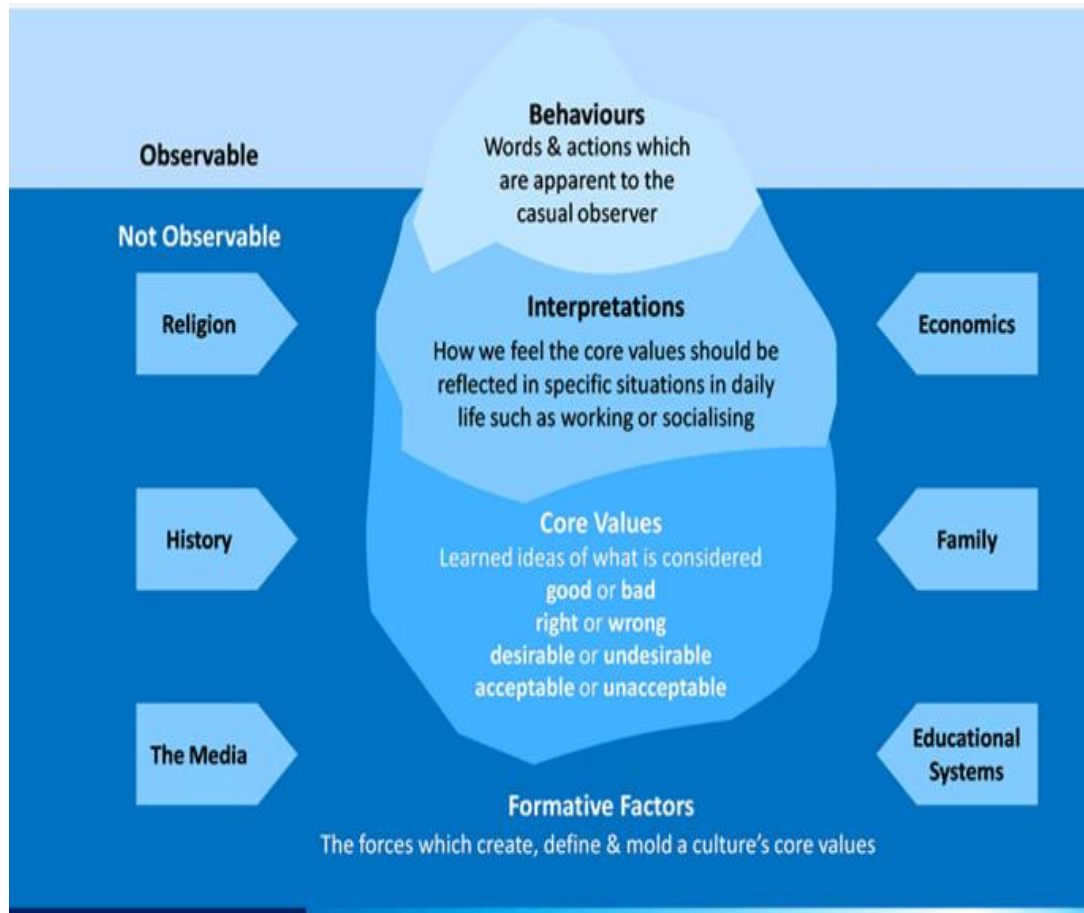
# Benefits of international teams

- Greater knowledge
- Broader perspective on issues
- More alternatives considered
- Greater satisfaction with & support of decisions
- Better problem comprehension
- Great for innovation and product development

# Conflict in international teams

- ▶ International teams face challenges for many reasons including:
  - Different communication styles
  - Different attitude towards hierarchy and authority
  - Conflicting decision making norms
  - Varying language levels
  
- ▶ For this reason it is important to **understand cultural norms** and **work with** them

Quand on connaît sa maladie,  
on est à moitié guéri





- The Cultural Iceberg
- Created by Edward Hall (1970)
- *Observable* layers and *non-observable* layers
- The tip as well as the top layer of iceberg is *observable* (i.e., behaviors and 'certain' daily practices)
- But the deep layers are *unobservable* (i.e., values, beliefs, norms, attitudes, perceptions)

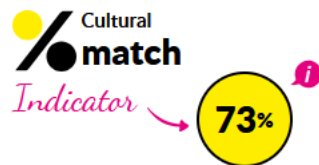
# What cultural norms do I most identify with?

- Take 15 minutes to complete the culture test



# Does this mean French people are more prone to conflict.....

Compare  France with  Ireland (Republic of)

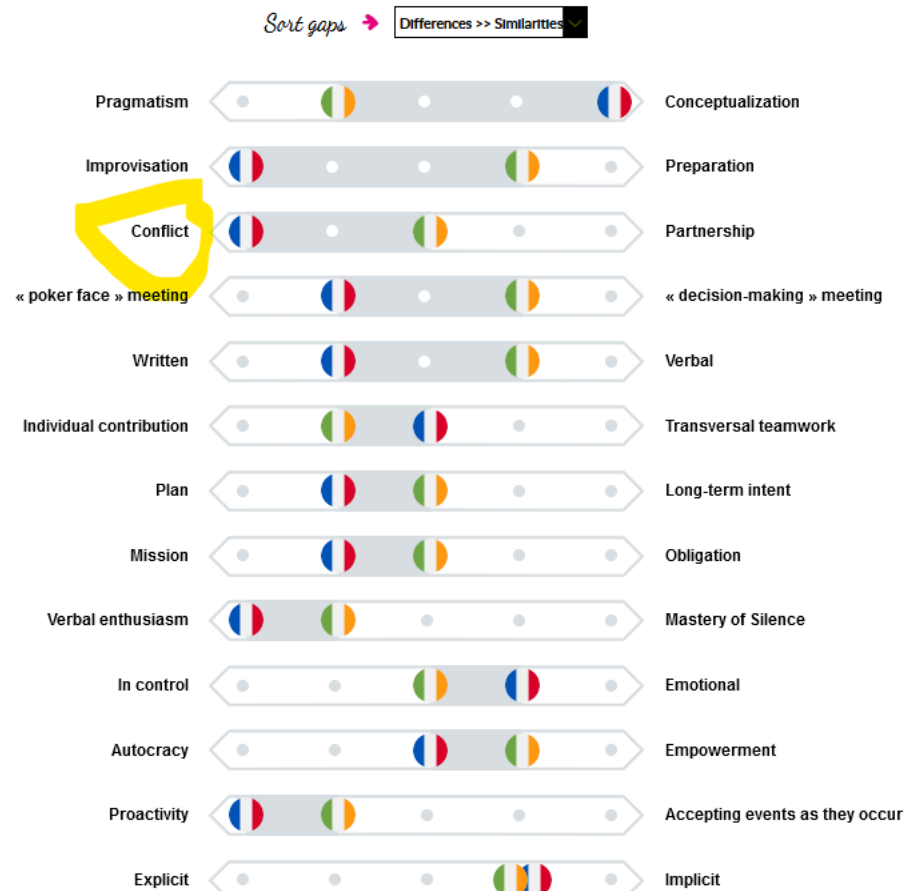


The 3 cultures you are *closest* to:

-  Chile: 83%
-  Ireland (Republic of): 83%
-  South Africa: 82%

The 3 cultures you are *farthest* from:

-  Canada: 57%
-  Ukraine: 56%
-  Russia: 51%



# Of course not!!!

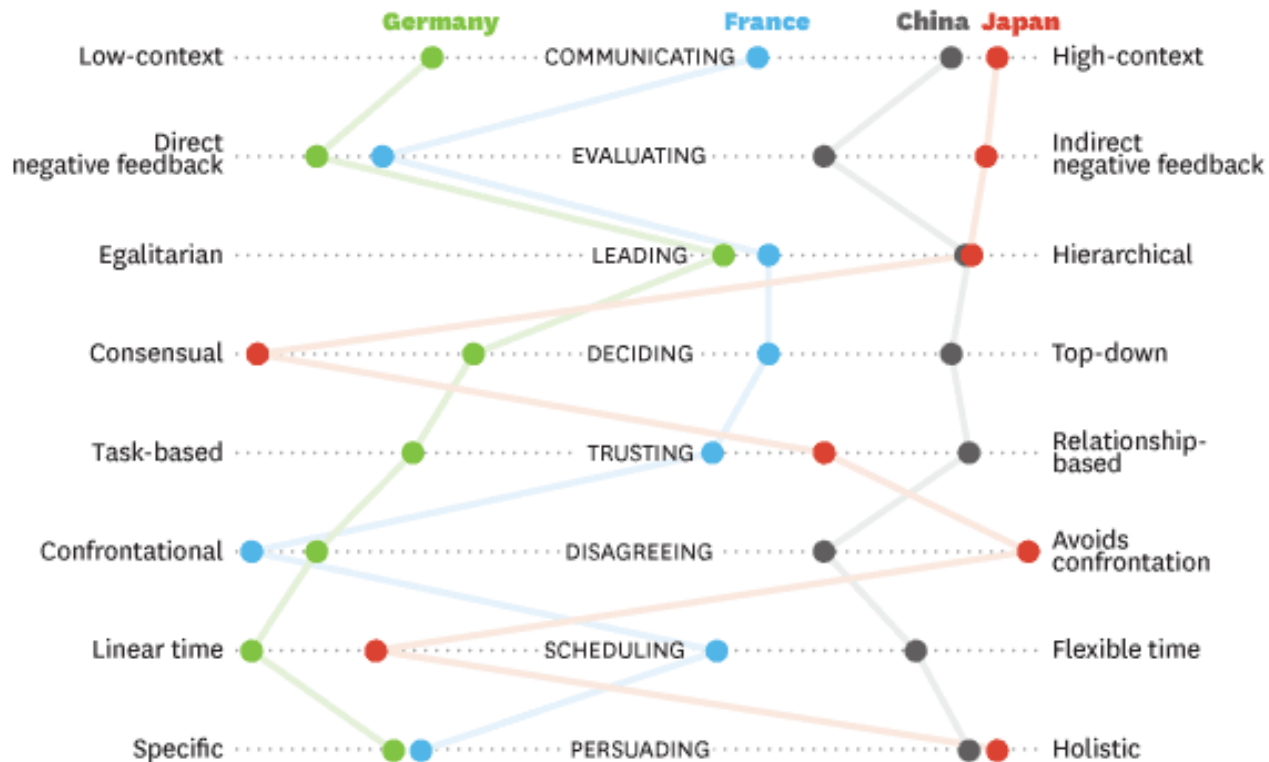
- Each culture has different ways of communicating in different circumstances
- Understanding these norms and being able to adapt is how we will reduce the chances of conflict on international teams
- The Cultural Map by Erin Meyers helps us to understand these differences and how to work through them





# Erin Meyer's Cultural Map

## MANAGEMENT STYLES ACROSS FOUR DIFFERENT CULTURES



SOURCE ERIN MEYER

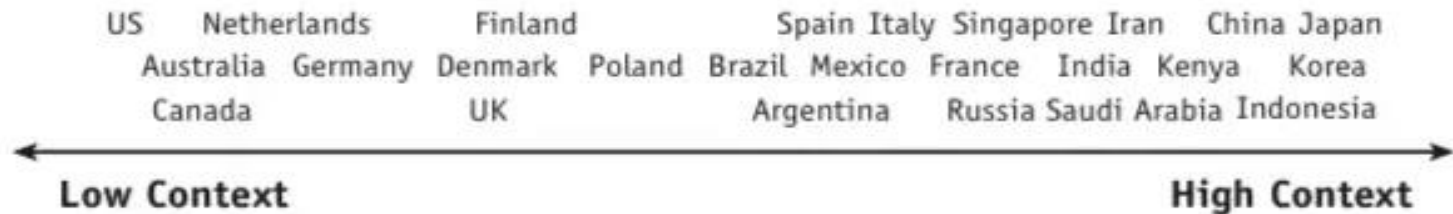
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# Interpreting the Culture Map

- Team 1 = Communicating (conflict scenario slide 15)
  - Team 2 = Evaluating (conflict scenario slide 18)
  - Team 3 = Leading (conflict scenario slide 20)
  - Team 4 = Deciding (conflict scenario slide 22)
  - Team 5 = Trusting (conflict scenario slide 24)
  - Team 6 = Disagreeing (conflict scenario slide 26)
  - Team 7 = Scheduling (conflict scenario slide 28)
  - Team 8 = Persuading (conflict scenario slide 30)
- 
- In your teams, look up your element of the culture map, go to your conflict situation (slide no. given), explain the conflict, how it can arise and how you would resolve it
  - You have 10 minutes to prepare

# 1. Communication

**FIGURE 1.1. 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....

 <b>ANGLO-DUTCH TRANSLATION GUIDE</b> 		
What the British say...	What the British mean...	What the Dutch understand...
I hear what you say.	I disagree completely.	They accept my point.
With all due respect ...	I think you are wrong.	They are listening to me.
Oh, by the way ...	This is the primary purpose of this discussion.	This isn't very important.
I'll bear it in mind.	I won't do anything about it.	They will use it when appropriate.
Perhaps you could give this some more thought.	Don't do it, it's a bad idea.	It's a good idea. Keep developing it.
Very interesting.	I don't agree/like it.	They are impressed.
Could you consider some other options?	Your idea is not a good one.	They haven't decided yet.
That is an original point of view.	Your idea is stupid.	They like my idea.
I am sure it's my fault.	It is your fault.	It is their fault.

# How can we resolve the conflict?

## 1. Communicating: High-Context vs. Low-Context

- **Scenario:** An international engineering team is working on a software development project. Marie, a French student, and John, an American student, are discussing the project specifications.
- **Marie (High-Context):** Marie explains the project details in a roundabout way, assuming John understands the nuances and implications.
- **John (Low-Context):** John prefers direct and explicit communication and is confused by Marie's indirect approach. He needs clear, detailed instructions.
- **Conflict:** John feels frustrated because he doesn't have all the details he needs, while Marie feels John isn't understanding her cues.

## 2. Evaluating

Russia	France	Italy	US	UK	Brazil	India	Saudi Arabia	Japan
Israel	Germany	Norway	Australia	Canada	Mexico	China	Korea	Thailand
Netherlands	Denmark	Spain		Argentina	Kenya	Ghana	Indonesia	



**Direct negative feedback**

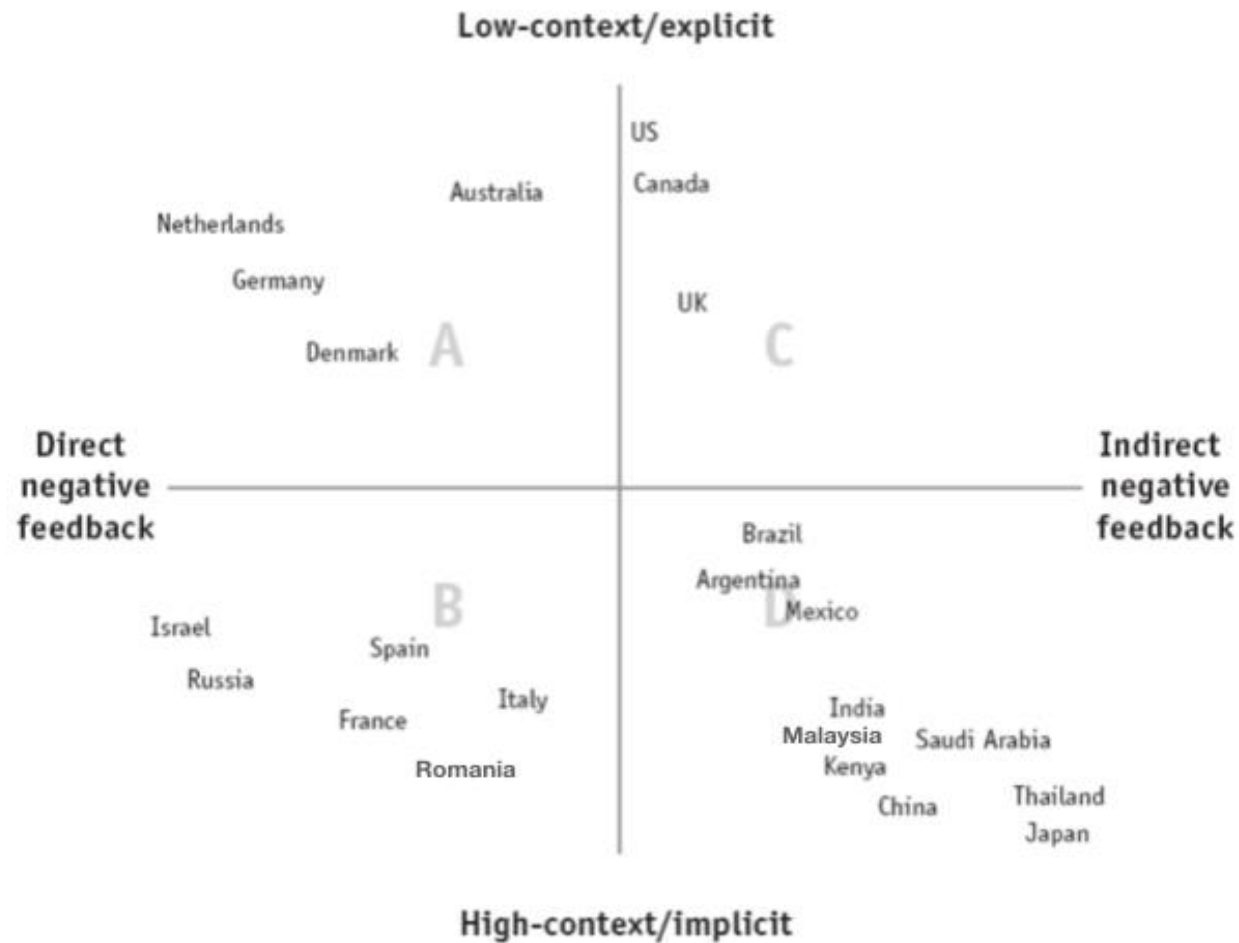
**Indirect negative feedback**

### **Direct negative feedback**

Negative feedback to a colleague is provided frankly, bluntly, honestly. Negative messages stand alone, not softened by positive ones. Absolute descriptors are often used (totally inappropriate, completely unprofessional) when criticizing. Criticism may be given to an individual in front of a group.

### **Indirect negative feedback**

Negative feedback to a colleague is provided softly, subtly, diplomatically. Positive messages are used to wrap negative ones. Qualifying descriptors are often used (sort of inappropriate, slightly unprofessional) when criticizing. Criticism is given only in private.



# How can we resolve the conflict?

- **1. Evaluating: Direct Negative Feedback vs. Indirect Negative Feedback**
- **Scenario:** Yuki, a Japanese engineer, and Hans, a Dutch engineer, are giving feedback on a design proposal.
- **Yuki (Indirect Negative Feedback):** Yuki offers subtle suggestions for improvement, emphasizing the positive aspects of the design.
- **Hans (Direct Negative Feedback):** Hans provides straightforward criticism, pointing out flaws directly.
- **Conflict:** Yuki feels Ahmed's feedback is too harsh and demotivating, while Hans thinks Yuki's feedback is unclear and unhelpful.



### 3. Leading

**FIGURE 4.1. LEADING**



**Egalitarian** The ideal distance between a boss and a subordinate is low. The best boss is a facilitator among equals. Organizational structures are flat. Communication often skips hierarchical lines.

**Hierarchical** The ideal distance between a boss and a subordinate is high. The best boss is a strong director who leads from the front. Status is important. Organizational structures are multi-layered and fixed. Communication follows set hierarchical lines.

# How can we resolve the conflict?

- **1. Leading: Egalitarian vs. Hierarchical**
- **Scenario:** A team of engineers is working on a project, and they need to make a crucial decision. Carlos, a Mexican team leader, believes in a flat team structure, while Priya, an Indian team member, expects more guidance from the leader.
- **Carlos (Egalitarian):** Carlos encourages everyone to voice their opinions equally.
- **Priya (Hierarchical):** Priya waits for Carlos to make the final decision and provide clear direction.
- **Conflict:** Priya feels uncomfortable with the lack of clear leadership, while Carlos is frustrated by the lack of initiative from the team.

## 4. Deciding



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

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

# How can we resolve the conflict?

- **1. Deciding: Consensual vs. Top-Down**
- **Scenario:** An engineering team needs to decide on a design approach. Hana, a Japanese engineer, prefers to reach consensus, while Robert, an American engineer, prefers a quick decision made by the leader.
- **Hana (Consensual):** Hana seeks input from all team members and aims for a unanimous decision.
- **Robert (Top-Down):** Robert suggests that the team leader make a quick decision to keep the project moving.
- **Conflict:** Hana feels the team is being rushed, while Robert is frustrated by the lengthy decision-making process.

# 5. Trusting

**FIGURE 6.1. 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 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.

# How can we resolve the conflict?

- **1. Trusting: Task-Based vs. Relationship-Based**
- **Scenario:** An international team is forming to work on a new engineering project. Emma, a British engineer, trusts based on professional competence, while Georgi, a Russian engineer, believes in building personal relationships first.
- **Emma (Task-Based):** Emma focuses on work performance and professional skills to build trust.
- **Georgi (Relationship-Based):** Georgi prioritizes social interactions and getting to know team members personally.
- **Conflict:** Emma feels Georgi spends too much time on social activities, while Georgi feels Emma is too focused on work and not interested in team bonding.

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

← **Confrontational** **Avoids confrontation** →

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

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

# How can we resolve the conflict?

- **1. Disagreeing: Confrontational vs. Avoids Confrontation**
- **Scenario:** A design team is discussing a controversial aspect of a project. Thomas, a French engineer, is comfortable with open debate, while Ling, a Chinese engineer, prefers to avoid direct confrontation.
- **Thomas (Confrontational):** Thomas openly challenges ideas and expects others to do the same.
- **Ling (Avoids Confrontation):** Ling avoids direct disagreement and prefers to discuss concerns privately.
- **Conflict:** Thomas feels Ling isn't contributing honestly, while Ling feels Thomas is too aggressive.



## 7. Scheduling

**FIGURE 8.1. 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.

# How can we resolve the conflict?

- **Scheduling: Linear-Time vs. Flexible-Time**
- **Scenario:** An international engineering project team is setting deadlines. Shakar, an Indian engineer, prefers a flexible schedule, while Stefan, a German engineer, insists on a strict timeline.
- **Shakar (Flexible-Time):** Shakar believes in adjusting deadlines as needed based on project developments.
- **Stefan (Linear-Time):** Stefan sticks to a set schedule and expects everyone to meet the deadlines.
- **Conflict:** Shakar feels pressured by rigid timelines, while Stefan is frustrated by what he perceives as a lack of discipline.

Italy Russia Germany Argentina Sweden Netherlands Australia  
 France Spain Brazil Mexico Denmark UK Canada US

← Concept-first Application-first →

Latin European Germanic Latin European Nordic European Anglo-Saxon

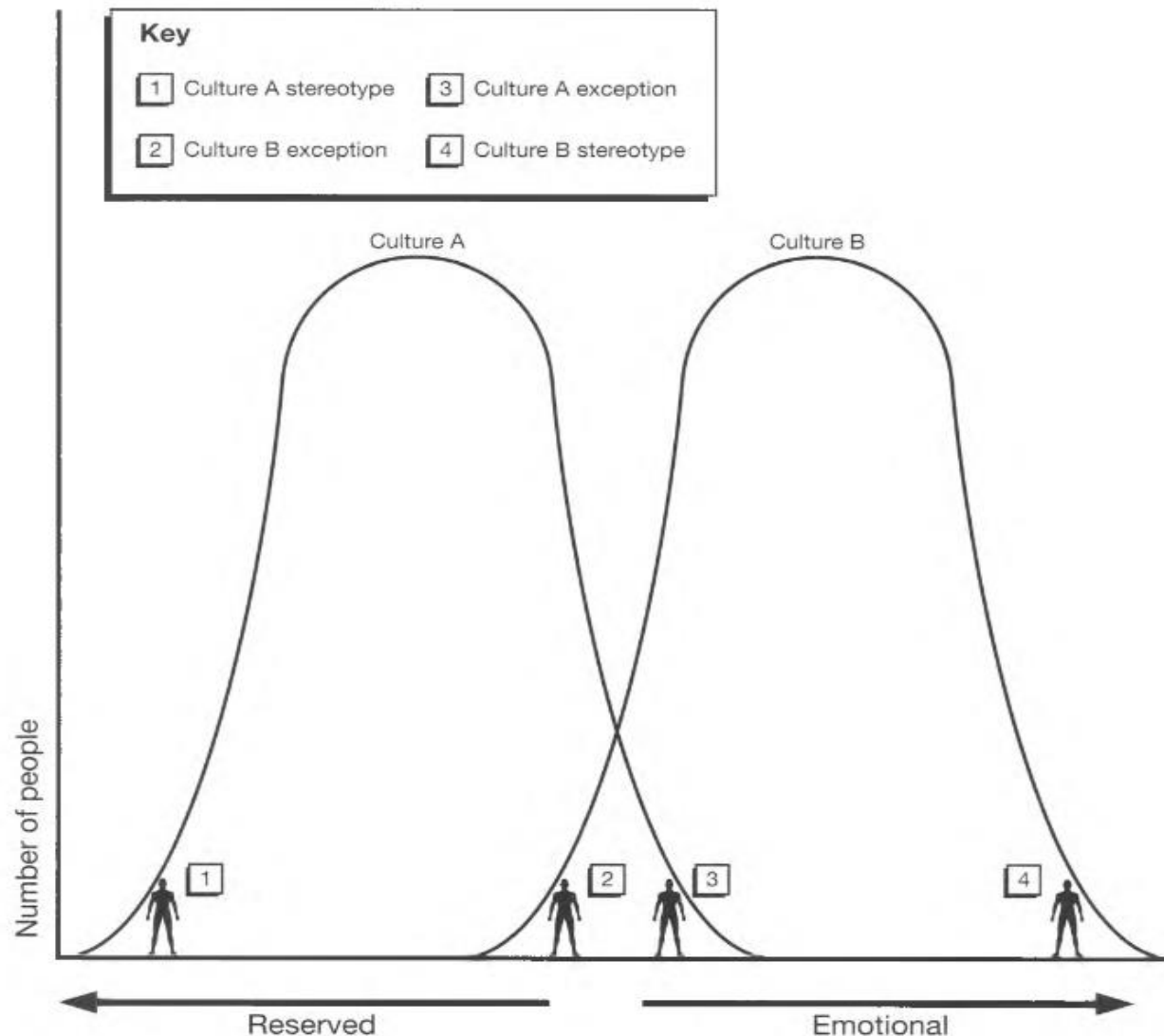
Individuals have been trained to first develop the theory or complex concept before presenting a fact, statement, or opinion. The preference is to begin a message or report by building up a theoretical argument before moving on to a conclusion. The conceptual principles underlying each situation are valued.

Individuals are trained to begin with a fact, statement, or opinion and later add concepts to back up or explain the conclusion as necessary. The preference is to begin a message or report with an executive summary or bullet points. Discussions are approached in a practical, concrete manner. Theoretical or philosophical discussions are avoided in a business environment.

# What should Stéphane do?

- Stéphane Baron is an INP alumni engineering working for Michelin in Clermont Ferrand. He has a problem...
- He noticed his British colleagues were not reading his mails – especially the most important ones!
- Face2Face they got on really well so it wasn't personal...
- He knew Brits loved emails so he didn't think it was cultural
- He went to great efforts to write clear mails for them using a logical structure:
  - Paragraph 1: Introduced the topic
  - Paragraph 2: Built his argument, appealing to his teammates sense of logic and developing the general principal
  - Paragraph 3: addressed the most obvious potential concerns with his arguments
  - Paragraph 4: Explained his conclusion and asked for his temmates support

# Not everyone falls into their cultural stereotype



# Lets go back to Gapsmoove

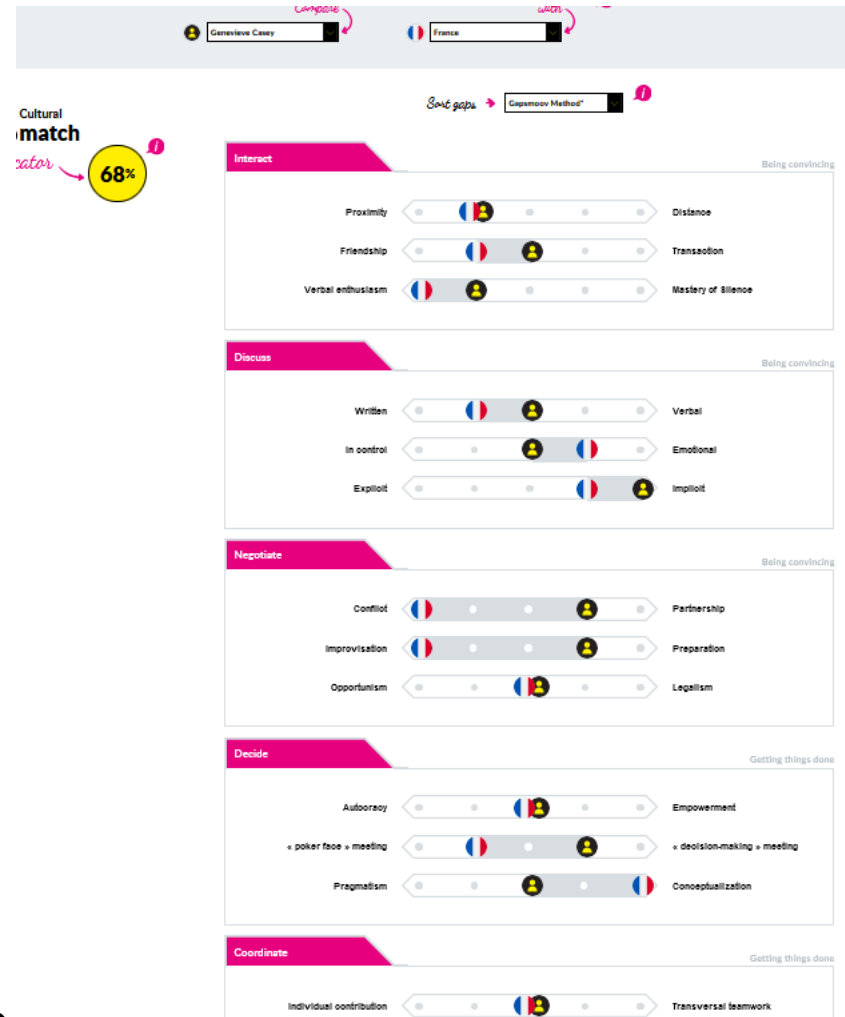
Cultural match  
Indicator **83%**

The 3 cultures you are *closest* to:

- Chile: 83%
- Ireland (Republic of): 83%
- South Africa: 82%

The 3 cultures you are *farthest* from:

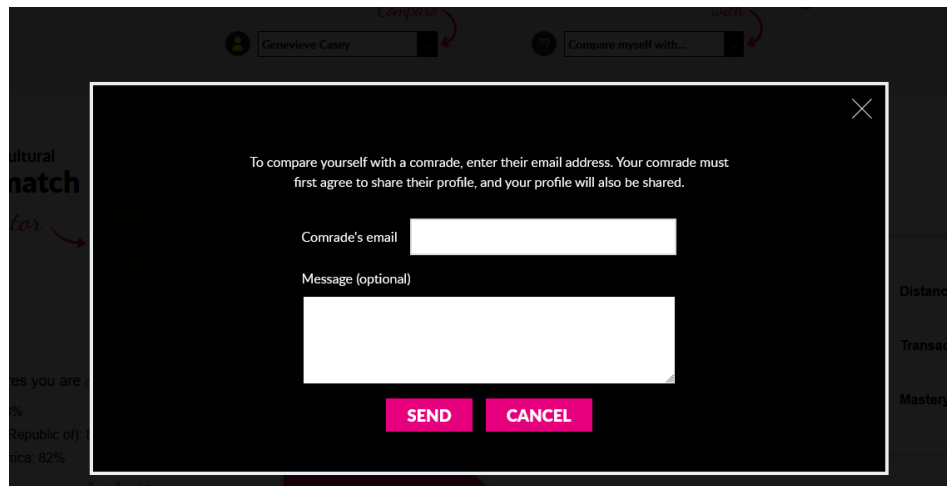
- Canada: 57%
- Ukraine: 56%
- Russia: 51%



How do you compare to your home culture?

# Compare myself with... MY COMRADES

- In groups of two, use the Gapsmoove tool to see how you might have cultural conflicts with each other



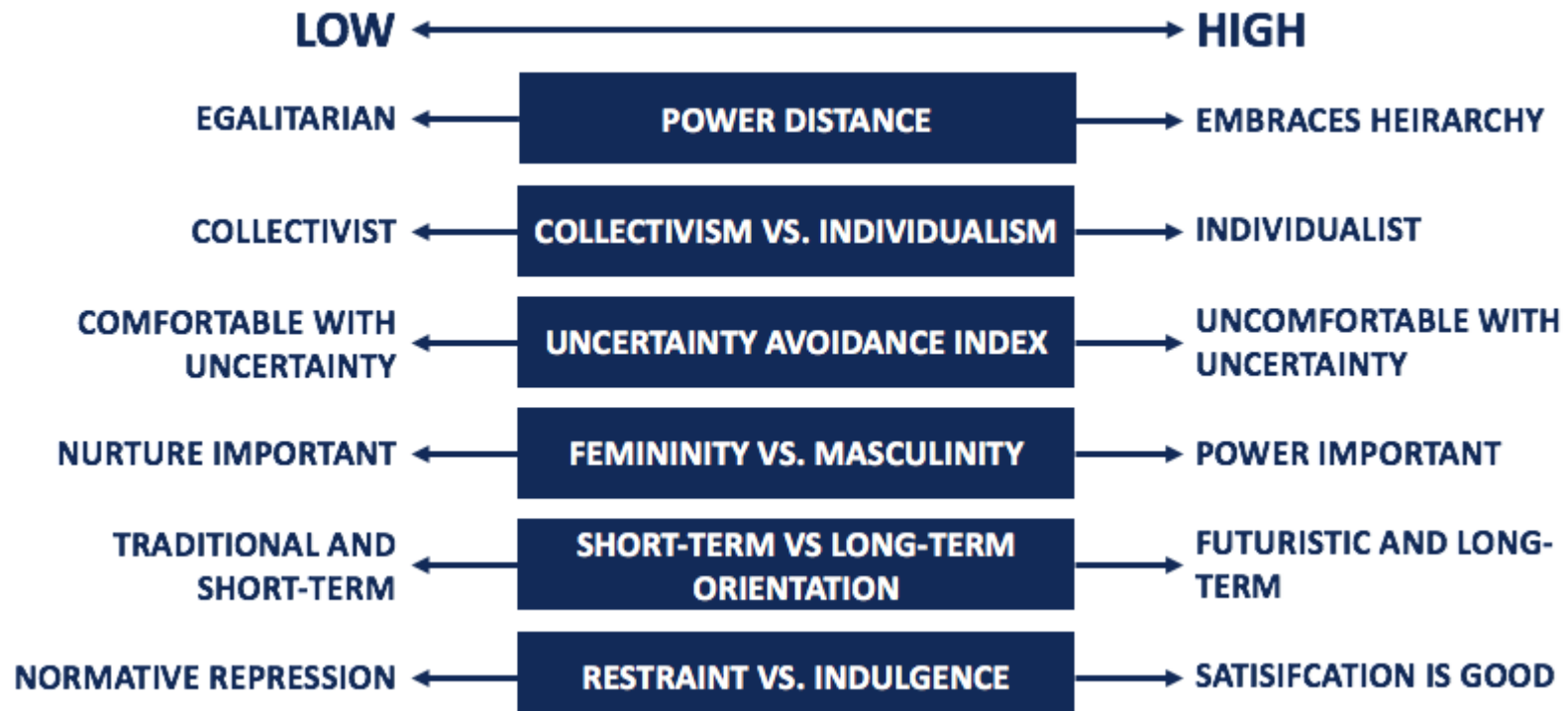
The screenshot shows a web interface for the Gapsmoove tool. At the top, there are two input fields: one for the user's name (labeled 'Genevieve Casey') and another for 'Compare myself with...'. Below these is a large modal window with a close button (X) in the top right corner. Inside the modal, the text reads: 'To compare yourself with a comrade, enter their email address. Your comrade must first agree to share their profile, and your profile will also be shared.' There are two input fields: 'Comrade's email' and 'Message (optional)'. At the bottom of the modal are two buttons: 'SEND' and 'CANCEL'.

# Case Study

- Using both the cultural road map and the Gapsmoove tool, answer the two Erin Meyers questions for your case study in your teams.

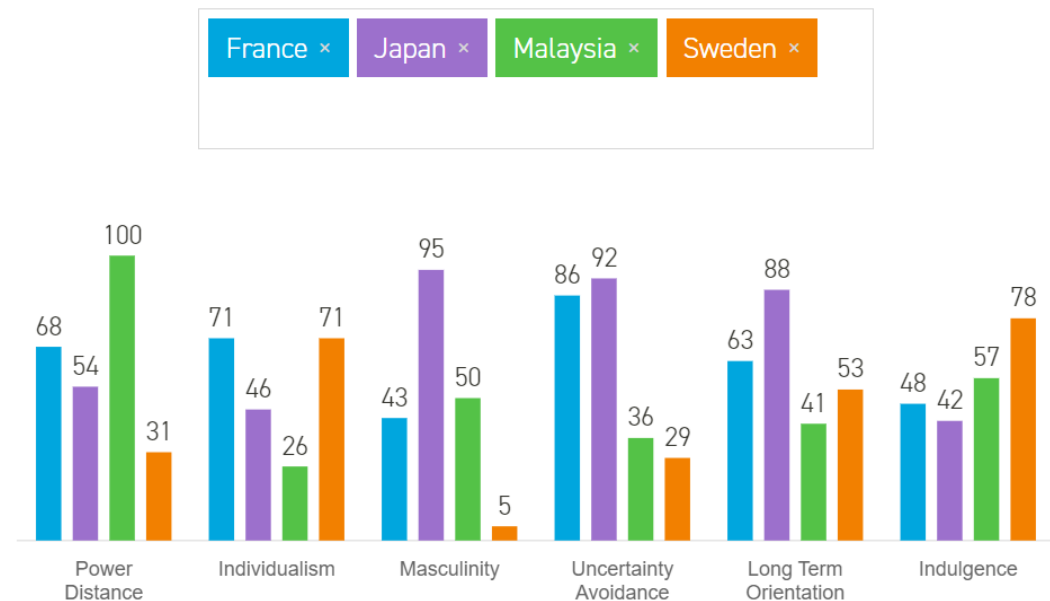
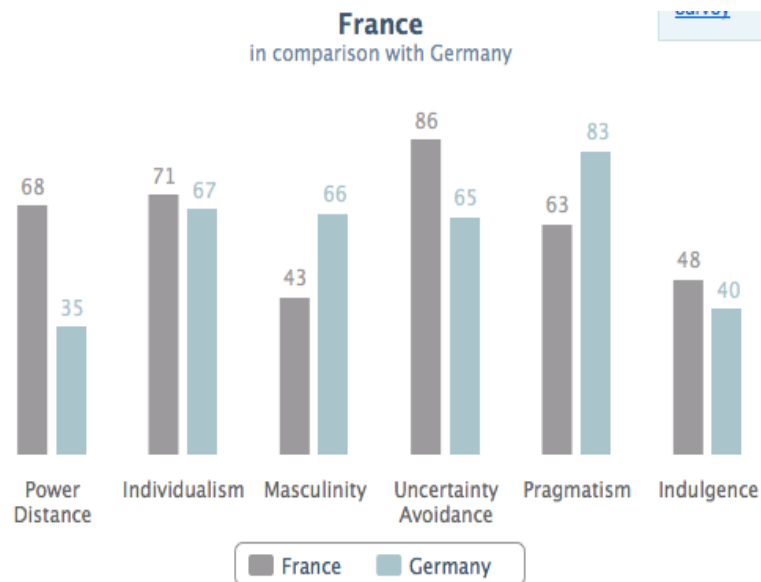


# Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions



# National Cultural Differences

- <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/france>



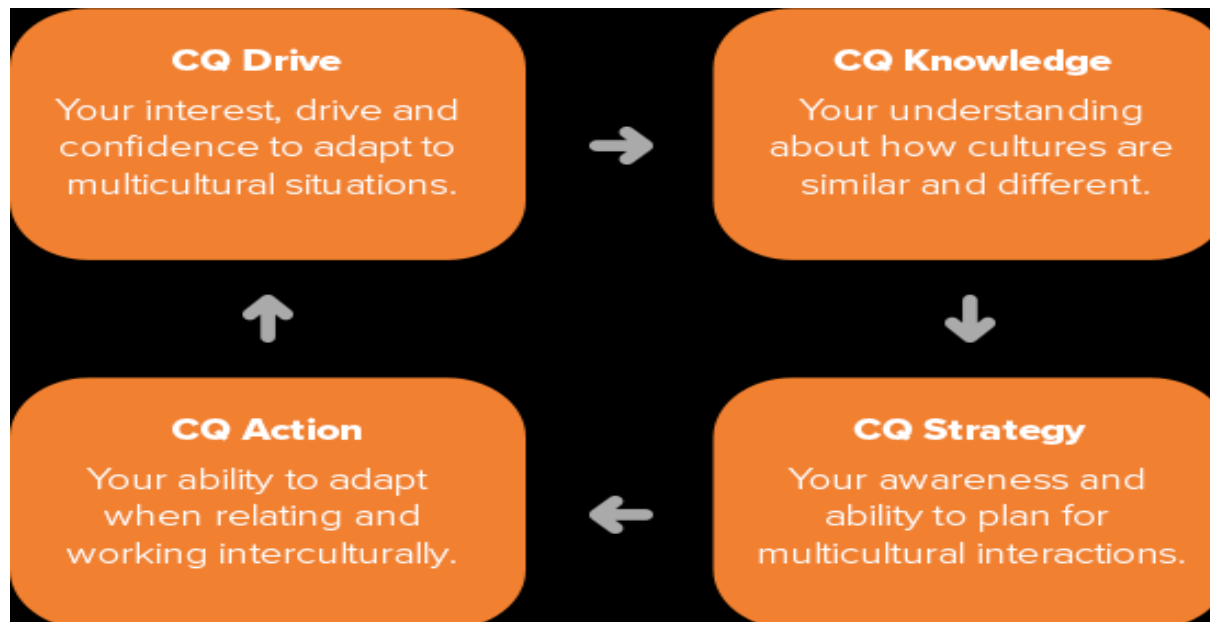
# French workers Clichés

- <https://fb.watch/4EdR3sCI85/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiujTPWpzJw>

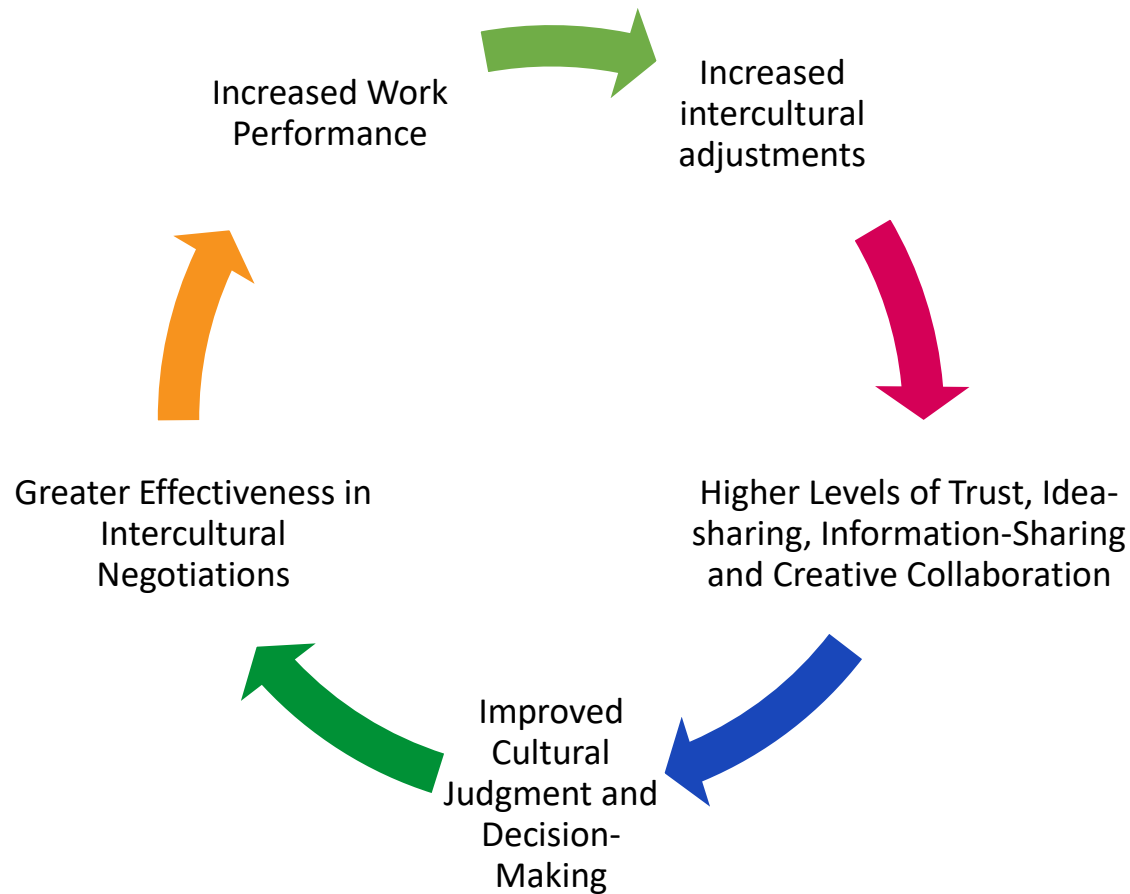


# What is cultural Intelligence

*Cultural intelligence*: an outsider's seemingly natural ability to interpret someone's unfamiliar and ambiguous gestures the way that person's compatriots would.



# Benefits of CQ



# Cross cultural Skills

- **Relational skills**; whether you enjoy talking and interacting with people from other cultures
- **Tolerance of uncertainty**; whether you are able to tolerate uncertainties, ambiguities and unexpected changes in an intercultural interaction
- **Adaptability**; whether you can change your behavior according to the cultural demands
- **Empathy**; whether you can put yourself in a culturally different person's shoes and imagine the situation from his or her perspective
- **Perceptual acuity**; whether you understand other people's feelings and subtle meanings during intercultural interactions

# Benefits of developing your CQ

- Creating productive relationships based on giving importance to people's differences
- Communicating effectively in different cultural settings
- Establishing a common ground
- Maximizing teamwork in groups where people act and think differently
- Differences can be used to improve innovation processes and assess intercultural communication
- Maximizing corporate brand investment
- Providing tools for improving sales success, people performance and brand image
- Encouraging people to be the best they can be
- Offering insights to better understand international colleagues and clients

## Communicating effectively in international teams





# Additional Ressources

- <https://www.imt-mines-albi.fr/fr/imt-didalang-interculturalite-humanites>
- <https://www.coursera.org/learn/carnet-interculturel/home/week/1>
- <https://hbr.org/2014/05/navigating-the-cultural-minefield>