Culture is shaped by our experiences in a wide variety of situations that influence the way we view and understand the world in which we live.

When we refer to ‘a culture’ we are talking about a group of people who share a similar background. This often shows itself in hidden patterns of communication, viewpoints they adopt and expressions they use.

**Culture is important for a number of reasons, because it influences an individual's life in a variety of ways, including values, views, desires, fears and worries.** **In addition, belonging to a culture provides people with a sense of identity, purpose and belonging. The world is smaller.**

**Culture influences perceptions**

The way you see the world is directly influenced by your background; your parents brought you up, your teachers educated you, your friends conditioned you according to the tacit rules of your local culture. Your views on right and wrong, duty and pleasure, order and chaos, reason and emotion, pride and shame – are all coloured by filters of culture.

**Culture affects behaviour**

To apply a national stereotype on an individual person is destructive. Yet, you can predict with some accuracy how a person from a given culture is *likely* to behave. And if you plan *without* taking culture into account, your project will be under threat.

**What to do**

Work at developing trust & then openly discuss how respective cultural differences might be affecting an issue.

Be open-minded – don’t apply a national stereotype to individuals.

Double-check understanding to avoid mistakes

**The Learning Styles of the 4 Generations At Work**

Much research has been done as to how to organizations can best teach members of each generation. Most often, the resulting reports break down learning styles on a continuum from formal to informal.

Common learning styles for each generation:

**Traditionalists** — Born **before 1946**, traditionalists tend to favor a more structured, “command and control” oriented learning program. Classroom lectures are often preferred. As more experienced members of the team, members of this generation may also be ideal mentors in select roles and organizations.

**Baby Boomers** — Born **between 1946 and 1964**, baby boomers expect a more personally-focused learning structure. The classroom continues to be an effective setting, although members of this generation tend to favor in-class participation, reflection, and feedback to bring them more directly into the process.

**Generation X** — Born between **1965 and 1980**, the members of Gen X are often noted as the most fiercely independent of the 4 groups, prioritizing self-directed educational opportunities and programs that enable them to learn on their own schedule.

**Millennials** — Born **after 1980,** this latest generation to enter the workforce has married the learning preferences of its two predecessors, favoring highly personalized training on a self-directed schedule. As the members of Gen Y grew up with the internet, it should be no surprise this cohort also prefers to access information on-demand, whenever and wherever they may happen to want it.