

# Global IQ Connect Program Compilation

Piseth Tang – tangpiseth43@gmail.com

September 25, 2024

As the title suggests, this document outlines a compilation of the reflection pieces that I had written during my undertaking of the [GIQC](#) (Global IQ Connect Program) at the [University of Adelaide](#) from the 12th of March to the 11th of April 2024. The program spanned 5 weeks and there will be a response for each one of them and my own summary at the end.

---

## Week 1 - Share an 'Epic Fail'!

As a preliminary task, we were required to complete a CQ Self Assessment Quiz at the start of the program and at the end to compare their results.

### Question 1:

I modify my behavior to make others more comfortable when I interact with people who are from different cultural backgrounds. I change the way I speak and act when I am in cross cultural settings. I mimic others to make sure that I follow local conventions so that my speech patterns and body language are not offensive.

- . None of the description fits me
- . Only some of this fits me
- . Half of the description fits me
- ☒ 4 Most of the description fits me
- . The statements describe me perfectly

### Question 2:

I am very interested in other cultures, and I enjoy meeting people who have different

cultural backgrounds. I am confident that I can live in different cultures and that I can adapt to different parts of the world.

- . None of the description fits me
- . Only some of this fits me
- ☒ 3 Half of the description fits me
- . Most of the description fits me
- . The statements describe me perfectly

**Question 3:**

I plan carefully before I meet with someone who is from a different cultural background. After one of these experiences, I reflect carefully and try to make sense of the interaction.

- . None of the description fits me
- . Only some of this fits me
- ☒ 3 Half of the description fits me
- . Most of the description fits me
- . The statements describe me perfectly

**Question 4:**

I generally understand other cultures and cultural values. I know about the basic ways in which cultures are similar and the ways they are different.

- . None of the description fits me
- ☒ 2 Only some of this fits me
- . Half of the description fits me
- . Most of the description fits me
- . The statements describe me perfectly.

Below outlines how one would assess their self-assessment result:

- a). 4 - 7 points: You see yourself as low in Cultural Intelligence. A CQ personal development plan could help you to become more capable of functioning effectively in

culturally diverse situations.

- b). 8 -16 points: You see yourself as moderate in Cultural Intelligence. A CQ personal development plan could help you to enhance your capabilities in areas where you see yourself as less capable of functioning effectively in culturally diverse situations.
- c). 17 - 20 points: You see yourself as high in Cultural Intelligence. A CQ personal development plan could help you to build on your impressive CQ strengths and become even more capable of functioning effectively in culturally diverse situations.

According the guide above, I see myself somewhere in the middle of the spectrum and my goal is to be more informed and confidence in expressing myself and my culture/beliefs.

And then, We were asked to describe a cultural cross-cultural mishap (when a situation experienced didn't go the way one expected) using the [T.R.A.F.I.C.](#) model.

**Response:** I have been in Adelaide for a good 7 months. I must say that people over here, and I presume in Australia in general, prefer that we maintain a direct communication style, without tip-toeing around the subject matters.

I have been proven time and time again that, especially in working environments, people just want you to speak your mind and I can attest that they even appreciate you more if you could do so. Case in point – Earlier on this year, I ordered a pair of 20 KG Dumbbells. Since I chose to pick them up myself, I had to travel 12+ kilometers to a warehouse on-foot – once I reached the place, I picked 2 packages up, both amounted to 40 KG. The workers over there looked at me incredulously as I told them that I would carry these to a train station nearby which is 10-minute away. Bear in mind that I had done seemingly impossible physical activities in the past but on that day I doubted whether I could make it. Instead of asking for help (which I really wanted to but did not want to burden their working schedule), I carried the dumbbells outside the warehouse. Having walked around 200 meters from the warehouse, I had to drop them down and rested for god knew how long. Moments later, a guy from the warehouse, in a car showed up and offered to help bring me and my order there. I hesitated, then accepted his offer. We reached the train station and I managed to bring those dumbbells onto the train. Although my endeavor did not end there with regards to getting those weights all the way to home, I realized that – had I spoken up for assistance earlier, people would have very much been happy to help so that I could have conserved so much stamina. I believe the lesson here can be summed up in the following saying - by whom I do not recall - "Ask and you shall be given. Seek and you shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you."

The above saying goes much, much deeper than my particular circumstance but at the very least, it covers my intention of composing this piece of writing very thoroughly, that is, I must learn to be more assertive and integrate myself with my words. I am

certain that this does not only apply to cultural contexts but also to life in general.  
Thank you for reading. P.S. I am a tad-bit late!

The second part required us to select two posts, from fellow participants in the discussion form, that I find most interesting and comment on them, including how I might have dealt with the situation if I were in their places.

**First post:** In PNG (Papua New Guinea) culture, when friends or family invite you as a guest to their home or out to eat for a special occasion, they are obliged to buy your food.

A friend of mine had been invited out to dinner by a few of his friends. Upon arrival they all had a look at the menu, and selected their respective dishes. After a few minutes, my friend had realised that everyone would be paying for their own dinner, so he selected the cheapest meal on the menu as he did not come prepared to spend money on food, expecting others to pay for his meal, as was his custom.

This Epic fail relates to the aspects of communication and rules. Communication, or lack thereof, shows how others assume their cultures are understood by others from different cultural backgrounds. It's good to explain things and manage that through informal chats. The rules are different everywhere, so it is also my friends responsibility to learn how to things work in Australia.

His experience helped him to understand Australian culture.

**My response:** Hey <OP's name>, I experienced something along that line when I was invited to hang out with my Adelaidean friends last Saturday. We went bouldering and once we got to the counter, I had a hunch that I would need to pay for a AUD 28 entry free. I asked one of my male friends whether I needed to and he responded by saying, "Is it alright if that's the case?" with a concern expression. "Of course!", I said promptly.

Normally, from where I am from, if you invited somebody to partake in informal activities such as sports or watching movies, you would pay for them. But, each man to his own, I guess!

**Second post:** When I came to Australia this year, something strange happened (for me).

In India, we usually don't call people by their names to show respect. Instead, we use words like "bro/bhaiya" or "didi/sis" for older people, and "Aunt" or "Uncle" for those even older. So, when I stayed with an Indian family in Australia, I thought their kids would call me "Di" or "Didi" or "sis." But they just said my name. I was surprised and told the child it's not polite to call elders by their names. Then, I said their parents and then the parents explained that if you introduce yourself with your name and don't say how you want to be called, people will use your name. This was new for me, but I'm getting used to it. Now, if someone younger than me calls me by my name here, I understand it's okay.

This experience taught me about different cultures and how important it is to talk about these things. It's interesting how customs can be different in different places.

Adjusting to new ways of doing things is part of the fun of traveling and living in new countries.

**My response:** Hi <OP's name>, I catch your drift. Last semester, I had a lengthy chat with my Marine Ecology lecturer after his lecture. At the end of the conversation, I bid him good-bye by saying "See you, professor" and immediately caught onto this, he rectified by saying "Not professor!, just jhis namei." From that point onwards, I have become more adjusted to calling almost all lecturers by their first name. Whereas back in my country, even with foreign teachers – say of French, Italian, German, English descent – I normally called them "Professor/Teacher jtheir namei." I remember moments when my friends deliberately called them by their first names! Secured their names in the detention list – haha!

## Week 2 - Value Each Other

The second week of the program requires us to work in a group, where each person had to select a value/belief that is important to their home culture or to them personally. Then, we would take turn listening to each other explaining their respective culture and as a group, we had to formulate a piece of reflection by taking notes on any feelings that came up.

**Group's Response:** We discussed the ideas of family, community, such as the role of neighbours, and how different jobs are viewed.

Our chosen values were shared before group members commented, reflecting on how it compares to their experiences. Zahra's and Pranav's experience living in Australia allowed them to reflect on what they have witnessed about Australian culture and we discussed their thoughts and feelings.

The discussion was respectful, with each member expressing their thoughts on what had been shared and asking questions to better understand the topics.

For Jacquie, hearing how valued family and community are in India provided a "warm and fuzzy" feeling because of the positivity of having a support system. However, when reflecting on the often detached-style of Australians, specifically when it comes to the elderly, felt sad. A take-away shall be remaining more connected with those around her.

For Pranav, hearing Zahra talk about her encounter with the taxi driver, I felt that like him, my identity is also greatly influenced by my cultural values. When we talked about family, I could never have imagined not living in the same city as my parents and living away from them. This is a result of my firmly held values, which both mould my personality and determine what is good and wrong for me.

For Zahra, thinking back on this morning's experiences, I started wondering about different views on simple things like part-time jobs. Chatting with a taxi driver, probably in his late 40s, and comparing it to my own thoughts as a younger person made me think: are these differences because of our ages, since the two of us were from the same ethnicity? Also meeting a person, probably in his late 60s, while volunteering, who had different ideas about family and connection got me thinking about how people in Australia and

India see boundaries and personal space differently especially since home in my family think it's a Western idea. I felt like having a mix of values from both cultures would be good, but then I wondered if it's fair to expect everyone to think that way. I've got a lot to think about, and I'll take some time to sort through these ideas.

We concluded that our experiences around the topics of family, community and work have been very different. No conflict occurred as we were able to see the positives even though our cultures are different.

As for Piseth, who was not able to attend the discussion, caught up with us during this week's workshop to provide a value widely held in his home country, that is, parents and teachers (guardians) don't normally encourage children to work (even part-time or casual) during full-time studies in high schools and universities. He followed through with an explanation that since students are expected to study 7AM to 5PM every day, it is rarely the case that they have the choice of opting for one of the morning, afternoon or evening period. He commented that it is the opposite over here at Adelaide. Jacquie chimed in by confirming this proposition but lightly put on the table that it is not an obligation for every children to work. It is that parents believe letting their children go and earn some side cash in tandem with their study is a good way of developing crucial skills – customer service, basic food handling and hygiene skills – that are transferrable later on onto their other careers. Like Pranav and Zahra, I am onboard with Jacquie's comments. I feel and think that this discrepancy stems even beyond the modern cultural landscape. It is derived from generations of un-encouragement and ignorance. The mentioned skills are something that many young Cambodians lack. But at the same time, that is just my observation as I, myself, also lack such skills. All in all, we did not pursue the topic into any more details but I believe that this value of work versus study is a topic worth diving deeper into. Although our values differ, I can see how Jacquie's viewpoint helps young people develop fundamental skills. P.S. Dear Annette, Since I engaged in a little discussion with my team members during the workshop, I managed to come up with the above composition. We are not sure if I am allowed to send my writing separately like this as I wasn't able to attend the previous discussion.

## Week 3 - What I see & What I feel

This week's topic concerns observation versus interpretation. And similar to last week, this was a group effort. We were tasked to discuss an observation of our fellow group members' culture or just a group member himself or herself. And in that discussion, we had to provide an interpretation of that observation. Finally, on our own, we had to write a reflection piece regarding the discussion.

**My response:** I was able to catch up with Jacquie on the observations and interpretations that I have come up with on Australian culture, in general. I laid on the table the following two observations – a beach cultured nation, especially here in South Australia and a laid-back “No worries” attitude and.

I made the first observation through going on trips with my Adelaidean friends several beaches in Adelaide where I could see them very active and it matches the depiction of what I associated the word “Australia” with. Whereas my second observation was made during a conversation my housemate who is from Perth, Western Australia as I mentioned the practical exams that were on the horizon. He didn’t seem to be fazed at all as he said that I would be alright and told me that it would be over before I knew it. I was flummoxed by this energy as I thought, “Is this the ceiling of the Australian education? Most domestic students here seem to be wasting their time and potential with pubs and drinks. They could be so much, much more. Only if they knew.”

With the observations and interpretations laid out above, Jacquie responded in strong unison with my views on the beach culture of Australia as she added that “... not everyone likes it” but a majority fancy having a local beach where they could go and cool down, especially during summer time! We did not conflict on this matter. However, her comments on my second observation assert that my views on “potential and happiness” do not match how young Aussies view those subject matters. Instead, they gravitate towards more of what makes them happy and not “to place too much burden upon themselves.” This prompted further pondering on my conversation with my Aussie friend from Perth, and before I knew it, I have come to grips with the fact that I am an international student operating under the conditions set out by the Australian government and he is a citizen so we perceive our academic journeys very differently. Finally, I don’t think that the Australian society, and western society, have climbed to where they are, in the global competence hierarchy, through sheer luck. They must have gotten something fundamentally right – something that is worthwhile for me to be more humble and learn from.

## Week 4 - Cultural Differences

We were not given any writing task on week 4. Our only tasks were to complete two online quizzes - a CQ SELF-ASSESSMENT and a CQ REVIEW QUIZ. The second quiz was just a review of the concepts of that week – Conflic Management as an antidote to cultural differences was the over-arching theme. I did very well, scoring 90 %. I scored 17 points out of 20 for the Self-Assessment Quiz. It is instructive to recall that I scored only 7 for it in the first week. Below outlines how one would assess their self-assessment result:

- a). 4 - 7 points: You see yourself as low in Cultural Intelligence. A CQ personal development plan could help you to become more capable of functioning effectively in culturally diverse situations.
- b). 8 -16 points: You see yourself as moderate in Cultural Intelligence. A CQ personal development plan could help you to enhance your capabilities in areas where you see yourself as less capable of functioning effectively in culturally diverse situations.
- c). 17 - 20 points: You see yourself as high in Cultural Intelligence. A CQ personal

development plan could help you to build on your impressive CQ strengths and become even more capable of functioning effectively in culturally diverse situations.

Therefore, according to the metric, I see myself as high in the CQ scale.

## Week 5 - Submission

There were no written assignments to be handed in the final week of the program. I attended the final workshop session hosted by the Annette Wheatley, the program coordinator herself and a guest speaker Divya (Employability & Career Development Specialist, KPMG). Divya provided a masterclass - engaging participants in thinking more reflectively in intercultural scenarios. After the workshop session, I had a lengthy conversation with Annette on the future of [Cultural Intelligence](#) and how insights from psychology could provide key support for the benefits of this intelligence variance (along with its other cousins – [EQ](#) and [IQ](#)). I mentioned the name of Jordan B. Peterson. I noticed that many of the people that I had talked with, upon the mention of professor Peterson's name, did not usually respond positively. I noticed the same pattern after my mentioning him during our conversation. Fortunately, I was able to sense a shift of opinions in her towards the end of our conversation. I walked her through some of Professor Peterson's main interests and his online [Self-Authoring Program](#). At the end of the conversation, I was positive that I had piqued her interest.

## Conclusion

As my memory wanes, there are still insights that have attached themselves within me. One of them being the openness in discussion between peers. Annette encouraged everyone equally to speak up and be more assertive. That encouragement has played a role in helping me become more integrated and confident in expressing my thoughts and beliefs. In all honesty, many of the ideas exhibited were not novel nor a breakthrough. They were old ideas, expressed in different frameworks and applied in effectively applied in different scenarios. This just goes to show that often times, *less is more*. I have decided to compile my entire work into this document, not with the intent of immortalizing it, but more of a resource for future readers to at least appreciate the role that cultural intelligence plays within this ever-multi-cultural world. And I hope that, at least, the readers have gained something. If there are any feedback or criticisms, please shoot me an email!