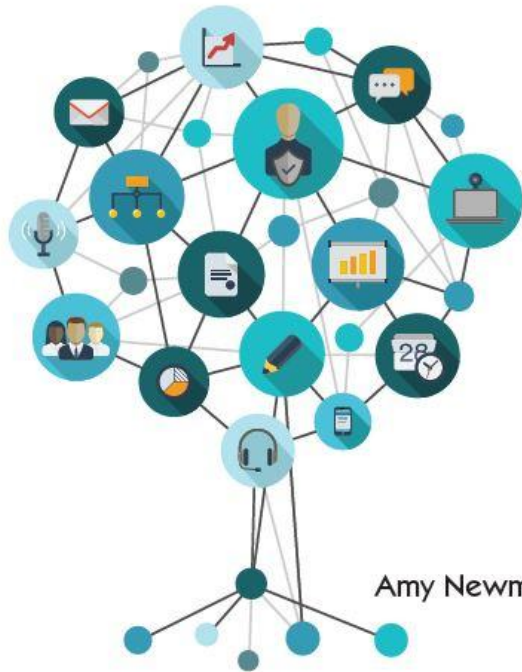


Business Communication and Character

11th Edition



Amy Newman

Chapter 3

Communicating Across Differences

Icebreaker: Discussion

1. How does the history of economic development and exploitation affect a country or region?
2. What is the impact of the growth of international trade and investment on a country's economy?
3. How can economic success look different for different countries or regions?

Learning Objectives

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- 3-1 Describe two approaches for shifting your mindset.
- 3-2 Define three types of conflict common in business environments and how to approach each.
- 3-3 Apply steps to engage in a difficult conversation in a business situation.
- 3-4 Identify ways to adapt language to audiences to honor differences.
- 3-5 Compare how people in high- and low-context countries communicate.

3-1

Shifting Your Mindset

3-1 Shifting Your Mindset (1 of 4)

Acknowledging your Own Culture Identities and Views

- **Diversity:** All the ways people may differ such as by skill set, education, experience, thought, workstyles, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, generation, physical abilities, family status, religious beliefs, political beliefs, core values as well as the more standard race, ethnicity, and gender
- **Intercultural communication (or cross-cultural communication):** communication which takes place between people from different cultures.
- **Culture:** the customary traits, attitudes, and behaviors of a group of people.

3-1 Shifting Your Mindset (2 of 4)

Acknowledging your Own Culture Identities and Views (continued)

- **Multiculturalism:** appreciating diversity among people, typically beyond differences in countries of origin.
- **Stereotype:** attribute an assumption we have about the group to an individual of the group that may or may not be true.
- **Implicit (or unconscious) bias:** certain preferences or aversions and we are completely unaware or mistaken about them.
- **Blind hiring:** redacting applicants' name, address, dates, hobbies, interests, volunteer work, and/or college to increase diversity and hire the best talent.

Figure 1: Questions About Your Identity and Views

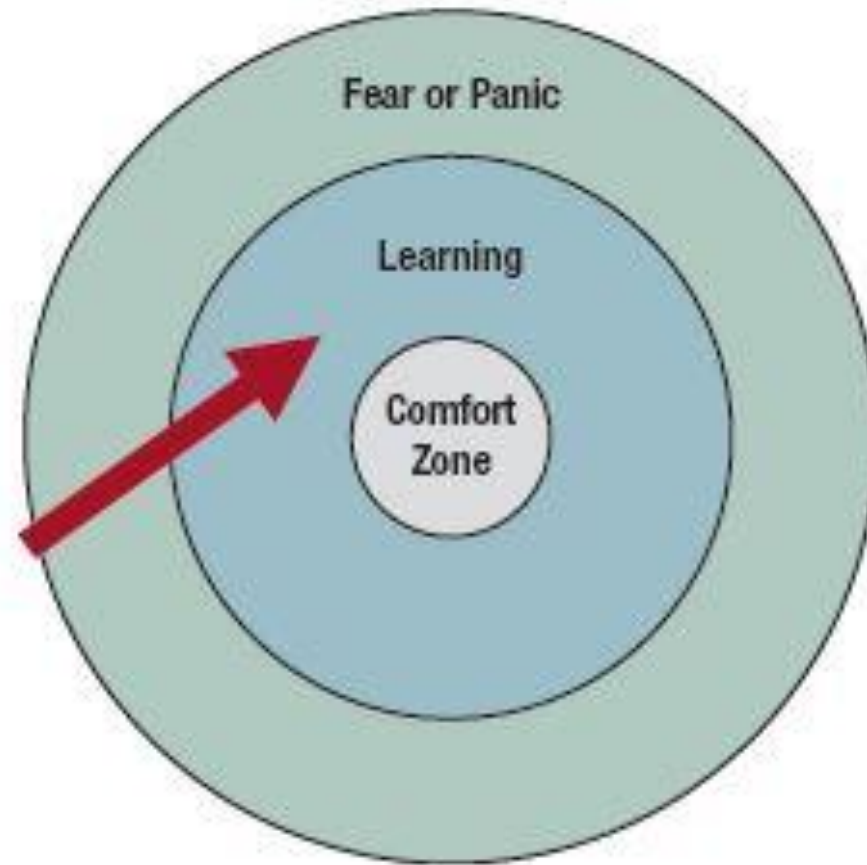
- With What groups do I affiliate or feel as though I belong?
- What is most important about my own cultural identity?
- What has shaped my cultural identity throughout my life?
- What do others need to know about me to understand and respect me?
- What is the hardest part of living up to my own cultural expectations?
- When have I felt ashamed of who I am?
- When have other misunderstood or misjudged me because of my affiliation or identity?
- When have I misunderstood or misjudged others because of their affiliation or identity?
- How open and I to people who are different from me?
- Do I interact regularly with people who are different from me?
- Do I avoid interacting with certain people? Why?

3-1 Shifting Your Mindset (3 of 4)

Learning When We're Uncomfortable

- Fear and Panic = reactive
- Comfort zone = complacent
- Learning = challenge and comfort
 - What we believe to be true is questioned
 - Reconcile our ideas with different ways of thinking
 - We might learn that multiple truths exist

Figure 2: We Learn When We're Uncomfortable



3-1 Shifting Your Mindset (4 of 4)

Reducing Blanket Judgments of Others

- Ask why you're judging
 - What does judgement teach me about myself?
- Choose humility
 - How is **humility** a strength at work and at home?
- Observe details without judging
 - Regularly practice mindfulness and meditation.
- Practice getting perspective

Written Response Activity

Refer to [Figure 1](#) and answer the questions as they pertain to you. Think about your personal history and answer the following questions:

1. What are you proud of?
2. What changes would you like to make?
3. How might this identity help or challenge your communication?
4. How might your response change for the group being addressed?

Written Response Activity Debrief

1. Have you had a situation where your cultural background was an advantage in the work or project you were working on?

3-2

Managing Through Conflict

3-2 Managing Through Conflict (1 of 3)

Assessing Types of Conflict



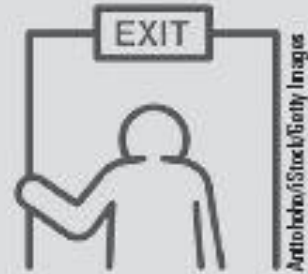
- **Task conflict** – work related
- **Relationship conflict** – personality differences
- **Values conflict** – politics, religion, morals, etc.
- **Workplace civility** – respect/concern for others
- **Workplace bullying** – negativity affecting work
- **Cyberbullying** – bullying online

3-2 Managing Through Conflict (2 of 3)

Deciding Whether to Engage in Conflict

- What is your motivation?
 - **Self-Righteousness:** a steadfast belief that your way is the right way.
 - Check your mood.
 - Consider the risks.

Figure 4: Risks of Taking Action to Address a Conflict

 Arttoholo/Stock/Getty Images	Ambiguity Can I accept unclear and conflicting perspectives, including my own? Am I willing to accept that my assessment may not be correct?
 Arttoholo/Stock/Getty Images	Vulnerability Am I willing to be exposed emotionally? Can I withstand public judgment and feeling ashamed, even if I'm wrong?
 Arttoholo/Stock/Getty Images	Loss What do I risk personally and professionally by taking action? Could I be ostracized, and will I damage relationships? Could I get fired?



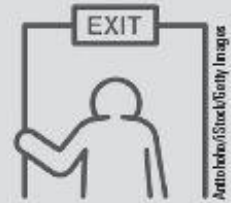
3-2 Managing Through Conflict (3 of 3)

Engaging Productively

- Task Conflicts
 - Rarely is one person solely responsible for the success or failure of a group effort.
 - Get underneath the surface disagreement.
- Relationship Conflicts
 - Get to know people personally
 - Courage to address conflict directly
- Values Conflicts
 - Affirm others' positive qualities.
 - Pursue a dialogue

Group Activity

1. Read through the discussion questions from Figure 4: Risk Taking Action to Address a Conflict. Discuss your thoughts within your group, then share your thoughts with the larger group.

 <small>Art: iStockphoto / iStockphoto Images</small>	Ambiguity Can I accept unclear and conflicting perspectives, including my own? Am I willing to accept that my assessment may not be correct?
 <small>Art: iStockphoto / iStockphoto Images</small>	Vulnerability Am I willing to be exposed emotionally? Can I withstand public judgment and feeling ashamed, even if I'm wrong?
 <small>Art: iStockphoto / iStockphoto Images</small>	Loss What do I risk personally and professionally by taking action? Could I be ostracized, and will I damage relationships? Could I get fired?

Group Activity Debrief

1. Have you found yourself in a position where you had to assess the risks of taking action to resolve a conflict? If you are comfortable sharing, discuss what the situation was and what outcome you reached.

3-3

Engaging in Difficult Conversations

3-3 Engaging in Difficult Conversations (1 of 3)

- **Preparing for a Difficult Conversation**

- Prepare yourself
- Choose a time and setting

- **Encouraging a Dialogue**

- Debate: win or lose, focus on countering
- Discussion: present and share ideas with a goal to persuade
- Dialogue: look for shared meaning and validate feelings in order to understand
- Emotionally Involved: discover new meaning and relationships.

3-3 Engaging in Difficult Conversations (2 of 3)

Encouraging a Dialogue

- Start the conversation
 - Begin the conversation positively and focus on shared goals—what you have in common.
- Listen actively and openly
 - Try to just listen while the person shares other perspectives.

Figure 7: Reflection in Action

Intellectual Reflection

Are you getting the results you want? Why or why not?

How is the person (or people) reacting to you? What do you observe about the others' tone of voice or body language?

Emotional Reflection

How do you feel right now? Are you frustrated, angry, annoyed, satisfied, excited, hopeful, or something else?

How are your emotions affecting the interaction? Are they encouraging cooperation and support, or are they getting in the way?

Physical Reflection

What is your body language right now, and what is it communicating to the other person?

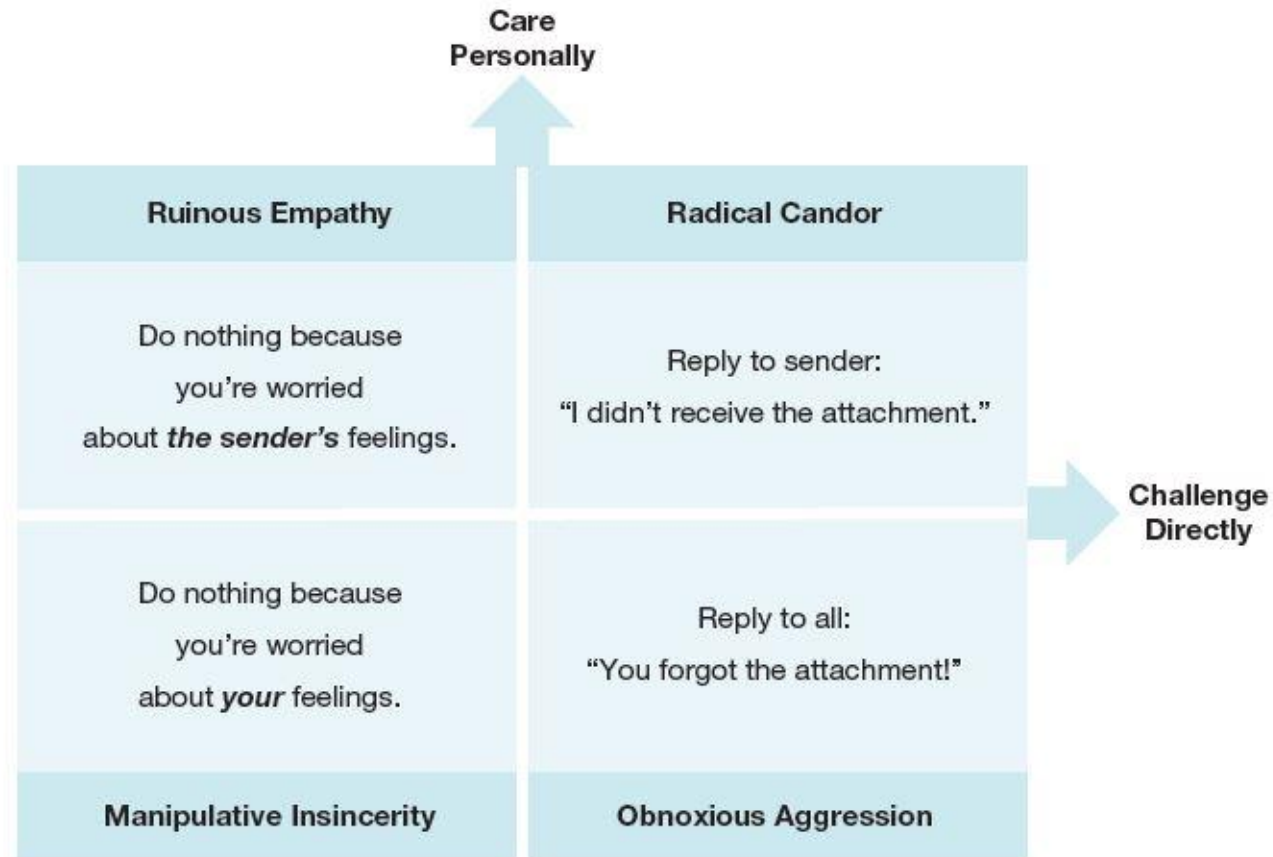
How do you feel physically? Does your physical feeling denote an underlying reaction that is inconsistent with the character you want to demonstrate?

3-3 Engaging in Difficult Conversations (3 of 3)

Giving and Receiving Constructive Feedback

- How to give positive and negative feedback
 - Describe behaviors
 - Give specific examples
 - Speak for yourself
 - Use encouraging language

Figure 8: Radical Candor for Giving Feedback



Class Discussion

1. Read and review the questions in [Figure 7](#) of the text. Apply these reactions to situations you have encountered recently. Do you notice any patterns in your reactions, the reactions of your coworkers, or in the outcome of the situations? What might be different if you reacted differently?

Class Discussion Debrief

1. Did the previous activity give you any confidence toward having difficult conversations with others and helping you control your reactions?

3-4

Communicating to Improve Inclusivity and Belonging

3-4 Communicating to Improve Inclusivity and Belonging (1 of 8)

Understanding Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging

- Diversity leads to:
 - Higher profitability
 - Greater levels of productivity and innovation
 - Better decision making
- **Inclusion** is about behaviors, such as inviting people to meetings and implementing their ideas.
- **Belonging** is about how people feel — the highest level of achievement
 - Do people feel valued?

3-4 Communicating to Improve Inclusivity and Belonging (2 of 8)

Bringing Your Whole Self to Work

- Benefits of being authentic:
 - Report greater job satisfaction
 - A stronger sense of community
 - Lower job stress
 - Higher levels of engagement

3-4 Communicating to Improve Inclusivity and Belonging (3 of 8)

Using Inclusive Language

- Race and ethnicity
 - Race the physical differences a groups or cultures consider socially significant.
 - Ethnicity the shared cultural characteristics (language, ancestry, practices, and beliefs)
 - Use the racial/ethnic terms the participants themselves use.
 - Be as specific as possible

3-4 Communicating to Improve Inclusivity and Belonging (4 of 8)

- Gender
 - **Gender** is a social construct and reflects how people feel and behave
 - **Sex** refers to someone's biology
 - Research shows negative impacts of stereotypes and **stereotype threat**.
 - **Gender identity** one's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither
 - **Transgender** identify or expression of gender differently from cultural expectations based on the sex assigned at birth
 - Ask about peoples preferred pronouns

3-4 Communicating to Improve Inclusivity and Belonging (5 of 8)

- Generations
 - There may be up to five generations working together
 - Are assumptions based on a stereotype?
- Sexual Orientation
 - How do you make space for LGBTQ1 (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, plus) to show up in the workplace?
 - Conversations about their social life and family?

3-4 Communicating to Improve Inclusivity and Belonging (6 of 8)

- Ability
 - Physical disabilities say nothing about someone's intelligence
 - Not all disabilities are visible
 - Be yourself
 - Use people-first language by identifying the person before the disability
- Religion

Figure 12: Strategies for Inclusive and Gender-Neutral Language

Use neutral job titles to avoid implying that a job is held by only men or only women.

Instead of	Use
salesman	sales representative, sales associate
male nurse	nurse
waitress	server
stewardess	flight attendant

Avoid words and phrases that unnecessarily imply gender.

Instead of	Use
you guys	everyone
manmade	artificial, manufactured
manpower	human resources, employees
mankind	people, humans

Use appropriate personal titles and salutations.

- If a woman has a professional title, use it (Dr. Martha Ralston, the Rev. Deborah Connell).
- In emails and letters, avoid Ms., Miss, Mrs., or Mr. by including the person's full name (Dear Cara Simpson) or by using the receiver's title (Dear Investor, Dear Neighbor, Dear Hiring Manager).

Find alternatives to gendered pronouns (e.g., "Each manager must evaluate his employees annually") and "one," which is considered formal.

- Use plural nouns and pronouns. "All managers must evaluate their employees annually."
- Use second-person pronouns (*you, your*). "You must evaluate your employees annually."
- Omit the pronoun. "Each manager must evaluate employees annually."
- Use *they* as a singular pronoun unless you need to abide by strict grammar rules.

3-4 Communicating to Improve Inclusivity and Belonging (7 of 8)

- Other characteristics
 - Family background
 - Income level
 - Veteran status
 - Political views
 - Children

3-4 Communicating to Improve Inclusivity and Belonging (8 of 8)

Offending and Taking Offense

- Apologies may repair a relationship but only if they are genuine.
- Take time to understand the offense and how it affected the other person
- If something offends you, you have every right to say so, but focus on your reaction instead of the other person.

Class Discussion 2

1. What steps have you seen your workplace or school take to ensure that people feel included in the culture?
2. Are there things you feel could be done better?

Class Discussion 2 Debrief

1. Have you seen an action taken to ensure that your culture was included in an activity (such as celebrating a religious holiday or hosting a meal that teaches about where you are from)?
2. How did it make you feel?

3-5

Adapting to International Cultural Differences

3-5 Adapting to International Cultural Differences (1 of 9)

- Improve your adaptability and communication across international differences.
- Each member of a culture is an individual.
- Adapt to people who may think, feel, and act quite differently from a cultural norm or stereotype.

3-5 Adapting to International Cultural Differences (2 of 9)

Understanding Cultural Differences

- Individualism
 - Cultures in which people see themselves first as individuals and believe that their own interests take priority.
- Time Orientation
 - Cultures that perceive time as a scarce resource and that tend to be impatient.
- Power Distance
 - Cultures in which management decisions are made by managers simply

3-5 Adapting to International Cultural Differences (3 of 9)

Understanding Cultural Differences (continued)

- Formality
 - Cultures that attach considerable importance to tradition, ceremony, social rules, and rank.
- Material
 - Cultures that emphasize assertiveness and the acquisition of money and material objects.
- Context Sensitivity

3-5 Adapting to International Cultural Differences (4 of 9)

Understanding Cultural Differences (continued)

- Verbal communication and relationships

High-Context Cultures

- Rely less on words and more on subtle actions and reactions of communicators.
- More implicit
- Emphasizes relationships among people
- Value silence

High-Context Cultures



3-5 Adapting to International Cultural Differences (5 of 9)

Understanding Cultural Differences (continued)

- Group-oriented behavior

High Capitalistic or Individualist Values

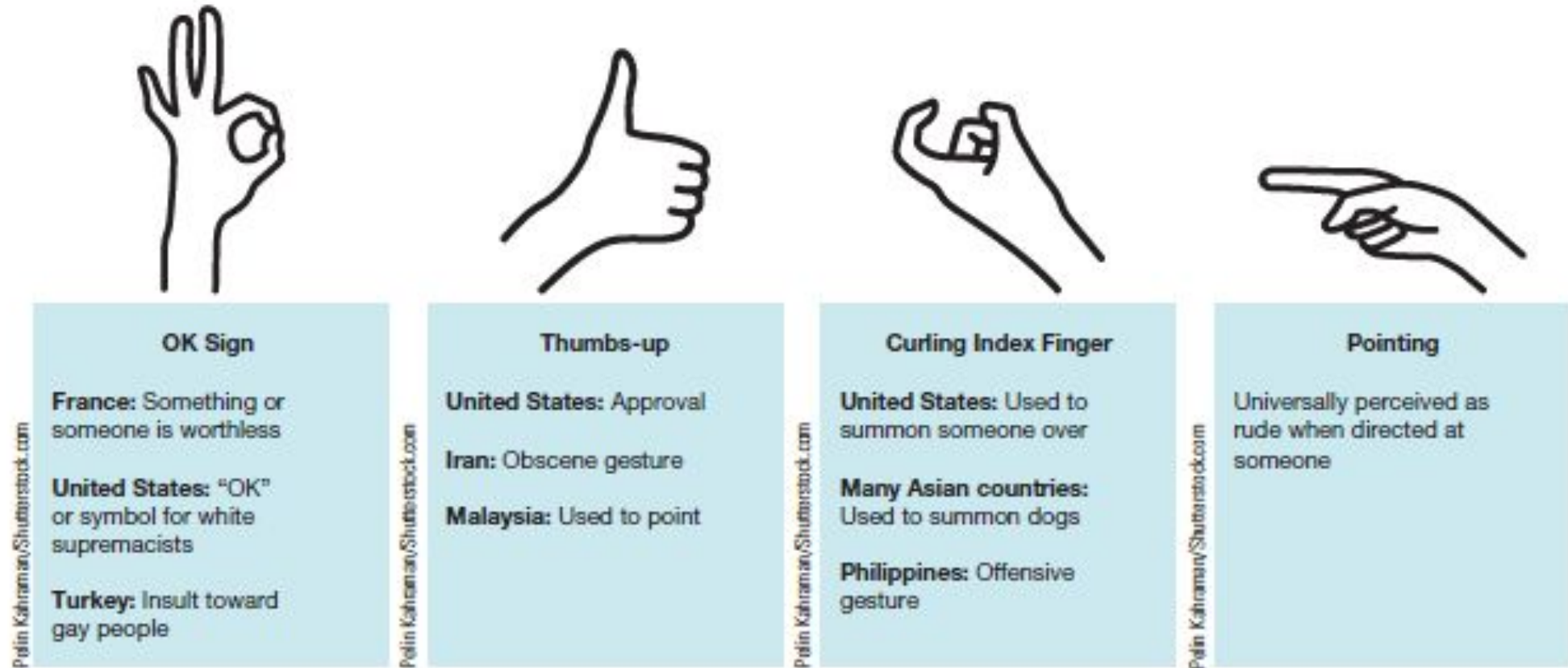
- Individual effort
- Competitive atmosphere
- Originality
- Emphasize skills

3-5 Adapting to International Cultural Differences (6 of 9)

Understanding Cultural Differences (continued)

- Body language and gestures
 - Eye contact
 - Varied and perceived differently by culture; East Asia considers it rude but to Western cultures, it builds connection

Figure 16: What Hand Gestures Mean in Different Countries



3-5 Adapting to International Cultural Differences (7 of 9)

Understanding Cultural Differences (continued)

- Time
 - Meaning given to time varies by culture and situation
 - North American and Europe emphasize punctuality
 - Latin American and Middle East time is more flexible
 - Asian and Latin American cultures favor long negotiations and slow deliberations.
- Space
 - Space preference determined by culture, geography and economics
 - Age, gender, and temperature influence interpersonal space

3-5 Adapting to International Cultural Differences (8 of 9)

Adapting to Different Cultures

- **Ethnocentrism:** the belief that an individual's own cultural group is superior.
- **Cultural competence:** means you can understand people from different cultures and engage with them effectively.
- **Cultural agility:** means that you are adept at navigating cross-cultural situations.
- **Cultural humility:** self-reflection and the recognition that you are never done learning.
- Err on the side of formality with an attitude of propriety and decorum.

3-5 Adapting to International Cultural Differences (9 of 9)

Communicating Across Languages

- **Verbals.** Avoid slang, jargon, and other figures of speech.
- **Visuals and nonverbals.** Use a variety of media: handouts (distributed before a meeting to allow time for reading), visuals, models, and so on.
- **Pace.** Pause to allow more time for understanding and for questions.
- **Comprehension:** Check for understanding after speaking.
- **Support.** Encourage non-native speakers verbally and nonverbally, for example, by smiling and nodding your head.

Class Discussion 3

1. Do you think it would be beneficial for a company to host informational sessions to teach employees about the various cultures you may encounter through your work?
 - Topics could include things like phrases used in the United States that are not appropriate in certain countries, types of foods that some cultures refrain from eating for various reasons, holidays the other countries typically take, and how other cultures interact with each other.

Class Discussion 3 Debrief

1. Have you participated in some type of cultural training that has benefited you at work or school?

Knowledge Check

What are two key strategies to use when communicating across differences?

- A. Learning another language and speaking slowly
- B. Research of preferred wording and cultural norms
- C. Humility and open-mindedness
- D. Working in a team and valuing individual ideas
- E. Share about yourself and solve the problem for everyone

Summary

Click the link below to review the objectives for the presentation.

[Link to Objectives](#)