Mandela Washington Fellowship 2017: Cultural Adaptation

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Outline of Our Time Together

1. Icebreaker
2. Overview of Cultures
3. American Cultural Generalizations
4. African Cultural Generalizations
5. Activities
6. Final Thoughts
Icebreaker

Human Values Continuum
Statement #1

A. The boss of a company should be powerful and respected

OR

B. The boss of a company should be friendly and relatable
Statement #2

A. When I do something that I believe is wrong, I feel guilt

OR

B. When I do something that others think is wrong, I feel shame
Statement #3

A. My number one goal in life is my personal success

OR

B. My number one goal in life is to help people
Statement #4

A. Failing to plan is planning to fail (always have a plan and think through all of the possibilities)

OR

B. Nothing ventured, nothing gained (you must be willing to take risks if you want to achieve something)
Statement #5

A. Invest in the future; change is good.

OR

B. Preserve the past; don’t let go of your traditions.
Statement #6

A. If I see something I like, I should buy it

OR

B. Buying things that aren’t absolutely necessary is a waste of money
Overview of Cultures

Cultural Iceberg
Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions
Stereotypes vs. Cultural Generalizations
The Tip of the Iceberg

Observable: May or may not be obvious

Beliefs
Time Orientation
Expectations
Space orientation
Religion
Values
Learning styles
Norms for interaction
And communication

Non-observable and often out of awareness

Food
Crafts
Dress
Traditions
Greetings
Games
Language
Music
Professor Geert Hofstede conducted one of the most comprehensive studies of how values in the workplace are influenced by culture.

He defines culture as “the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others.

Hofstede et al., *Cultures and Organizations*, page 6
Dimensions of National Culture

1. Power Distance
2. Individualism
3. Masculinity
4. Uncertainty Avoidance
5. Long Term Orientation
6. Indulgence

The fundamental issue here is how society handles inequalities among people.

Who’s in charge?

My door is open.

Large Power Distance

Small Power Distance
Statement #1

A. The boss of a company should be powerful and respected

High Power Distance

OR

B. The boss of a company should be friendly and relatable

Low Power Distance
The fundamental issue is whether people’s self-image is defined in terms of “I” or “we.”

Individualism – Individualism vs. Collectivism

- Winner takes all.
- There’s enough for everyone.

Collectivism
Statement #2

A. When I do something that I believe is wrong, I feel guilt

**Individualism**

OR

B. When I do something that others think is wrong, I feel shame

**Collectivism**
The fundamental issue is whether society is more competitive or more consensus oriented.

Show me the money!

Can’t we all just get along?
Statement #3

A. My number one goal in life is my personal success

Masculinity

OR

B. My number one goal in life is to help people

Femininity
The fundamental issue here is how a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known: should we try to control the future or just let it happen?

Let’s not rock the boat

Without risk there is no reward

4. Uncertainty Avoidance – Strong vs. Weak

Strong Uncertainty Avoidance

Weak Uncertainty Avoidance
Statement #4

A. Failing to plan is planning to fail (always have a plan and think through all of the possibilities)

Strong Uncertainty Avoidance

OR

B. Nothing ventured, nothing gained (you must be willing to take risks if you want to achieve something)

Weak Uncertainty Avoidance
The fundamental issue here is how a society maintains some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and the future.

Anything worth having is worth waiting for.

I want it now!

Long-term orientation

Short-term orientation
Statement #5

A. Invest in the future; change is good.

**Long-Term Orientation**

OR

B. Preserve the past; don’t let go of your traditions.

**Short-Term Orientation**
The fundamental issue here is the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses.
Statement #6

A. If I see something I like, I should buy it

**Indulgence**

OR

B. Buying things that aren’t absolutely necessary is a waste of money

**Restraint**
Comparison

“The cultural dimensions represent independent preferences for one state of affairs over another that distinguish countries (rather than individuals) from each other. The country scores on the dimensions are relative, as we are all human and simultaneously we are all unique. In other words, culture can be only used meaningfully by comparison.”

- https://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html
Stereotype vs. Generalization

Definition of Generalization

- A principle, statement, or idea having general application

- “To infer or draw inferences or general conclusions from many particulars”
  - American Heritage Dictionary
American Cultural Generalizations

USA
Midwest
West Lafayette & Lafayette
United States Power Distance – 40

Hofstede et al., *Cultures and Organizations*, page 59.
United States Individualism – 91

Hofstede et al., *Cultures and Organizations*, page 95.
United States Masculinity – 62

Hofstede et al., *Cultures and Organizations*, page 141.
United States Uncertainty Avoidance – 46

Hofstede et al., *Cultures and Organizations*, page 194.
Hofstede et al., *Cultures and Organizations*, page 257.
United States Indulgence—68

Hofstede et al., Cultures and Organizations, page 282.
American Ways

• Tipping, while not a common practice throughout the rest of the world, is expected in the U.S.

• Restaurants do not typically add gratuity to a bill, so patrons are expected to tip their server somewhere between 15-20% to reward them for their service. It is considered extremely rude not to do so, so be sure to check your bill and tip your waiter if gratuity hasn’t been added.

• Tipping is also expected if someone delivers your food to your home (e.g. pizza delivery), but it is not expected where you order food at a counter (e.g. McDonalds, Starbucks, etc.)
Midwest Cultural Values
Midwest Cultural Values

• Farming
  • The Midwest is a **cultural crossroads**. Starting in the early 1800s **easterners moved there** in search of better farmland, and soon Europeans bypassed the East Coast to migrate directly to the interior: Germans to eastern Missouri, Swedes and Norwegians to Wisconsin and Minnesota. The region's **fertile soil** made it possible for farmers to produce **abundant harvests** of cereal crops such as wheat, oats, and corn. The region was soon known as the nation's "**breadbasket.""

• Midwest Nice
  • Researchers from the University of Cambridge published a study in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* where they analyzed the personality traits of nearly 1.6 million people living in the United States over a 12-year span using Facebook, surveys and other methods.
  • According to the report, which measured five personality dimensions – neuroticism, agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness and extraversion – subjects from the Midwest states exhibited friendly and conventional traits more commonly than subjects from any other region.
West Lafayette & Lafayette

- [www.homeofpurdue.com](http://www.homeofpurdue.com) ("Visit Lafayette – West Lafayette")
  - Lafayette-West Lafayette, Indiana is home to just over 174,000 residents and is known for its diverse community with over 40 parks and extensive trail systems. The Community has a wide spectrum of businesses, including many nationally and internationally known high-tech corporations and institutions including Purdue University.

- **Lafayette**
  - "Small Urban City"
  - Population: 70,654
  - Median age: 30.9 years
  - Socio economic status: 59.9% of students K-12 receive free lunch

- **West Lafayette**
  - "College Town"
  - Population: 32,109
  - Median age: 23.1 years
  - Socio economic status: 14.2% of students K-12 receive free lunch
African Cultural Generalizations

Continent
Regions
Countries
Senegal* in comparison with Namibia* and Sierra Leone*

- No data for Indulgence
• No data for Indulgence
• All categories are within 5-10 points of each other
• No data for Indulgence

• All categories are within 5-10 points of each other

• Power Distance is very high (hierarchy is accepted)

• Individualism is very low (loyalty to family/extended family is important)

• Long Term Orientation is low (great respect for traditions, but small propensity to save for the future)
Power Distance is high; Individualism & Long Term Orientation are low (similar to last graph)
• Power Distance is high; Individualism & Long Term Orientation are low (similar to last graph)

• Large difference between Burkina Faso in Masculinity and Indulgence
The Tip of the Iceberg

Observable: May or may not be obvious

Non-observable and often out of awareness

Beliefs
Time Orientation
Expectations
Space orientation
Religion
Values
Learning styles
Norms for interaction And communication
Debrief

1. What are the cultural generalizations for the continent of Africa? (are there any disagreements or controversies?)

2. What different regions of Africa were identified (are there any disagreements or controversies?)

3. What are the cultural generalizations for different regions? (are there any disagreements or controversies?)

4. What are some cultural generalizations for different countries?
Activities

Who Am I?

Crocodile Parable
Who Am I?

1. Teacher

2. Daughter

3. Traveler

4. Woman

5. Christian
Debrief

1. Which two identities are most important to you?
2. What do underlying values do these identities hold?
3. Which identity is most shaped by the values of your culture?
4. Which identity are you most comfortable with?
5. Which identity are you least comfortable with?
Crocodile Parable

INSTRUCTIONS:

• Read the parable
• Write down the things you wished you could know more about
• Turn the paper over and do Step 1 on your own
• Get into small groups (3 or 4 people) and do Step 2 together. You MUST all agree
• Discuss Step 3
• Write your thoughts on Step 4
Crocodile Debrief

• What were the cultural rules represented by the people in the parable?
• Which person would it be most difficult to work with…Jane, Bob, Paul, Jack, Thomas?
• When we talk about these various generalizations of cultural rules, what regions of the world come to mind?
• What could have happened in each culture’s history to cause such cultural norms to develop?
Final Thoughts

Culture Shock
Learning Zone Model
Culture Shock

• “Culture Shock is the sense of disorientation or loss that comes with encountering fundamental differences in values and way of life” (pg 244).

• “Most people experience some degree of culture shock when they visit a new country, whether they admit it to themselves and others or not” (pg. 244).

• “Culture shock is more a product of the situation of being in a new culture than of the traveler’s personal traits. However, your traits—including patience, curiosity, sense of humor, and tolerance for ambiguity—can influence how deep or long-lasting the culture shock will be” (pg. 245).

• “While there may be some unhappiness and unpleasantness along with confusion and disorientation, the discomfort is a necessary step in learning about the new culture” (pg 245).

Culture Shock

- Power Distance
- Individualism
- Masculinity
- Uncertainty Avoidance
- Long Term Orientation
- Indulgence

Legend:
- United States
- Nigeria*
- Tanzania*
The 4 Stages of Culture Shock

Happy Meter

Duration

Honeymoon

Humour

Hostility

Home
THE PROCESS OF ADJUSTMENT

HOME COUNTRY

Leaving Home

Arrival in Australia

Culture Shock

Feeling Unhappy

Completion of Studies

Leaving Australia

The “W” Curve

Arrival in Home Country

Reverse Culture Shock

Re-Adjusting

Adaption to Life in Home Country
Learning Zone Model

- Where am I in this situation?
  - Comfort?
  - Stretch?
  - Panic?
Final Thoughts

• What aspects of your culture might positively or negatively influence your success . . .
  • In the USA?
  • In the Midwest?
  • In your Fellowship Group?
  • When you return home?

• Think:
  • How much of what I am experiencing is cultural?
  • How much of what I am experiencing is individual?
Questions and Comment?

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