Holy Hofstede!
Practical Training Based on
Geert’s Six Cultural Dimensions

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Human Values Continuum
Value #1

A. I believe in a healthy work/life balance.

OR

B. I feel selfish leaving my responsibilities for more than a couple days at a time.
Value #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.
Value #3

A. Success, status, financial security are the most important things in life.

OR

B. Relationships, happiness, and fulfillment are the most important things in life.
Intercultural Dialogues
Dialogue #1

• Mr. Johnson: What did you think of the new plan?
• Mr. Trudeau: Seems okay, but I’m still studying it. I want to be sure.
• Mr. Johnson: Still studying it after three weeks? It’s not that complicated.
• Mr. Trudeau: There are one or two aspects that might be a problem.
• Mr. Johnson: Oh, I know that. But we should put it in place and work the bugs out later.
• Mr. Trudeau: Seriously?
Ms. Spencer: Ah, Victoria. Please sit down.
Victoria: Thank you, ma’am.
Ms. Spencer: I wanted to ask you if everything’s going okay with your job.
Victoria: Yes, very much so, ma’am.
Ms. Spencer: It’s just that ever since I took over here, people have been coming to me with questions I know you can answer. Better than I, in fact, as I’m new to the London office and you’ve been working for us here for ten years.
Victoria: Yes
Ms. Spencer: Maybe if they asked you first, it would save some time.
Victoria: But they do ask me first.
Dialogue #3

Hiroshi: I understand Bob’s coming back from Osaka.

Christine: Yes, we’re reassigning him to New York. It’s too bad, too. He’s been pulling out all the stops ever since he got there last year.

Hiroshi: Is there something wrong? With his family, or his health, maybe?

Christine: No, nothing’s wrong. It just hasn’t worked out over there.

Hiroshi: I heard he had made some good contacts and even got a few feelers.

Christine: There’s been some interest, but he says the Japanese are just being polite. There’s been no real business.
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.”
Dimensions of National Culture
(adapted from Hofstede)

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

6-D Model©
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
Dialogue #2

Small Power Distance

• Ms. Spencer: Maybe if they asked you first, it would save some time.

Large Power Distance

• Victoria: But they do ask me first.
United States

https://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html
Individualism
(Individualism vs. Collectivism)

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

Winner takes all.

There’s enough for everyone.
Value #2

**Individualism**

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

OR

**Collectivism**

B. When I do something that others think is wrong, I feel shame.
Masculinity
(Masculinity vs. Femininity)

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

Show me the money!

Can’t we all just get along?

Masculinity
Femininity
Value #3

A. Success, status, financial security are the most important things in life.

OR

B. Relationships, happiness, and fulfillment are the most important things in life.
United States

https://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html
Uncertainty Avoidance
(Strong vs. Weak)

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

Strong Uncertainty Avoidance  Weak Uncertainty Avoidance
Dialogue #1

Strong Uncertainty Avoidance

• Mr. Trudeau: Seems okay, but I’m still studying it. I want to be sure.

• Mr. Johnson: Still studying it after three weeks? It’s not that complicated.

Weak Uncertainty Avoidance
United States

https://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html
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.

**Long-term orientation**

**Short-term orientation**

Anything worth having is worth waiting for.

I want it now!
Dialogue #3

Long Term Orientation

• Hiroshi: I heard he had made some good contacts and even got a few feelers.

• Christine: There’s been some interest, but he says the Japanese are just being polite. There’s been no real business.

Short Term Orientation
United States

https://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html
The fundamental issue here is the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses.

Indulgence vs. Restraint

Enjoy life!
Have fun!

Let’s maintain order
Value #1

A. I believe in a healthy work/life balance.

OR

B. I feel selfish leaving my responsibilities for more than a couple days at a time.
United States

https://geert-hofstede.com/countries.html
“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
Country Comparison

- Power Distance: United States (40), Germany (35), Brazil (69)
- Individualism: United States (91), Germany (67), Brazil (38)
- Masculinity: United States (62), Germany (66), Brazil (49)
- Uncertainty Avoidance: United States (46), Germany (65), Brazil (76)
- Long Term Orientation: United States (26), Germany (44), Brazil (83)
- Indulgence: United States (68), Germany (40), Brazil (59)
Country Comparison

- Power Distance: China* 80, India 77, Saudi Arabia* 95
- Individualism: China* 20, India 48, Saudi Arabia* 25
- Masculinity: China* 66, India 56, Saudi Arabia* 60
- Uncertainty Avoidance: India 30, India 40
- Long Term Orientation: China* 87, India 51, Saudi Arabia* 36
- Indulgence: China* 24, India 26, Saudi Arabia* 52

*Note: * indicates data for the specific region or country.
Cultures Within Countries


• This study did a meta-analysis of 558 studies measuring the original 4 of Hofstede’s dimensions (incorporating 32 countries).
• They found that the biggest culture gaps are within countries, not between them.
• One reason, they say, is decades of immigration across countries led to more diversity of values within countries.
• Their analysis showed that occupation and socio-economic status better defined shared values.
1. Read your colored slip of paper.
2. Think of an example of how that cultural dimension plays out across cultures in real life.
3. Find someone who has a different colored paper and teach them your cultural dimension in 2-minutes.
4. When the bell rings, switch with your partner and listen as they teach you their dimension.
5. Now, switch papers with your partner and repeat steps 1-4.
Resources

• Purdue ICL Website:
  https://www.purdue.edu/IPPU/ICL/Resources/

• Email us with your activities!
  icl@purdue.edu

• NAFSA Intercultural Activity Toolkit
Hofstede References

• www.geert-Hofstede.com


Other References


• Storti, Craig. *Cross-Cultural Dialogues*. Intercultural Press, 1994
Questions and Comments?

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Outline

1. Intro - 1 min (Carrie Anne)
2. Human Value Continuum – 10 min (Leighton)
3. Dialogues – 10 min (Beth)
4. Overview of Hofstede – 14 min (Carrie Anne)
5. Round Robin – 15 min (Annette)
6. Resources - (Leighton)
7. Questions – 10 min