

Cultural Dimensions

The following chart provides examples of observable behaviour by cultural dimension. This is a useful resource for practical questions that may occur during your course facilitation.

	If you scored high ...	How you like to manage ...	How you like to be managed ...
Collectivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You define yourself in relation to the team. You value group loyalty. You decide based on what's best for the group. Working as a group and supporting others is important to you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praise the accomplishments of the team. Avoid praising individuals in front of the group. Use the personal pronoun "we" and the collective "you". Encourage groups to work together and provide ample time for group meetings and decision-making processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't like my manager to praise me publicly. I prefer my manager to reward and praise my team. I like to involve others in decisions.
Individualism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You value independence and self-reliance. It's important for you to have freedom in your job. Your well-being is important to you. You like solving problems on your own. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praise individual accomplishments privately and publicly. Provide employees with an opportunity to demonstrate their skills for possible promotion. Demonstrate to the employee you see them as an individual. Allow for the competitive spirit to come through in project work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like when my manager praises and rewards my performance. I like when my manager gives me the freedom to make decisions and use my initiative. I like to be creative and to learn from my mistakes. I enjoy competition to demonstrate my skills.

<p>Hierarchy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You provide clear, explicit directions regarding duties, deadlines, etc. • You demonstrate a more authoritarian, distant, paternalistic leadership style. • You expect to encounter bureaucracy in organizations and government agencies. • You assume full responsibility for the success or failure of your team’s work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear instructions to your team, so they know exactly what and how you want them to complete their tasks. • Communicate you have the responsibility for the success or failure of a project, and you expect subordinates to do exactly as you say. • Maintain a certain distance to the employees and keep business separate from your private life. • Show your status by using your full title and name and by wearing expensive formal clothes, accessories and gadgets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I need clear and detailed instructions, so I know what is expected from me. • I accept decision-making power is distributed unequally. • I respect my manager because they carry the responsibility for the success of my work. • I am not comfortable calling my manager by their first name, I prefer formality. • When asked for feedback, I question my manager and may become suspicious of their expertise.
<p>Egalitarianism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You value getting to know people in an informal or spontaneous manner than about rules of protocol and etiquette. • You are more inclusive in your decision-making. • When you provide instructions, you stay away from being too prescriptive to allow for your employees to demonstrate their initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegate tasks that allow the employee to think freely and demonstrate initiative. • Offer employees to use your first name. • Suppress any sign of superiority such as expensive status symbols. • Request feedback from your employees and implement it into your planning. • Show you trust your team and you consider them as equals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel comfortable calling my manager by their first name. • I don’t want to be micro-managed. • I appreciate opportunities to show my initiative because that will lead to being promoted. • When asked for feedback, I feel valued.

<p>Time is Fluid</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are highly relationship-oriented; if you neglect "people needs" and relationship building in favour of keeping a schedule, you may meet resistance in accomplishing your goals. • Your plans are often fluid, changing frequently and sometimes last minute. • You strive for balance in your professional and personal lives. • You may not have the same urgency or ambition for completing business projects, sourcing new business, or personal career advancement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve all parties in planning projects and establishing deadlines so you won't be perceived as imposing unrealistic time frames, and you'll be more likely to get a responsive approach to completing projects on time. • Accept that people feel time is out of their control; this, sometimes, provides a justification for lateness, delayed deadlines, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like to work in teams. • I don't mind working on multiple tasks. • I value relationships. If I am needed by a family-member or a friend, punctuality – even for work-related appointments – becomes less important. • I appreciate being a member of a group with responsibilities towards my group. • I need time in teams to make decisions together even if that takes more time. • I am people oriented.
<p>Time is Money</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time is a manageable commodity within your control. You consider being late as disorganized, rude and/or unprofessional. • Time management is a highly valued skill. • You prefer start and end times for social functions and tasks. • Your contributions in meetings are concise and directly relate to the topic being discussed and understand the meeting might 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to arrive at business meetings or social engagements on time. If you are running late, call to advise people and apologize on arrival. • Prepare agendas and let your team know how long a meeting is scheduled. • Explain to employees that being on time is a sign of respect and model behaviour. • Plan projects and tasks in a linear way. One task at a time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to know what needs to be done – one task at a time. • I consider punctuality a sign of respect. • I like to have an agenda for meetings, so we can use our time efficiently. • I am task oriented.

	wrap up before everyone can fully express their views.		
Limited Personal Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need little personal space. You appreciate a touch on the arm or a physical connection while talking to people. You are comfortable having people stand close to you when in conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When in conversation, with an employee, lean in and demonstrate a connection to the person. Sometimes even by touching their arm or shoulder. Stand close to the person you are talking to. Don't apologize when you are standing close to someone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I interpret the closeness as a sign of engagement in the conversation. I expect that touching is common, and people will move closer during conversations. I benefit from understanding the concept of personal space and that people don't want the invisible space around them invaded.
Ample Personal Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You feel uncomfortable when people stand too close to you. You consider it disrespectful when people touch your arm when talking to you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that, in your culture, it is rare for people to touch. Maintain a good distance when talking to a colleague. No touching the arm or shoulder during conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I want to learn that touching can be misinterpreted. I need my personal space respected. I benefit from learning that in a culture with a need for ample personal space, it is rare to touch or even stand close to people in conversation.
Indirect Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-verbal gestures are as important to you as the explicit verbal message in conveying the meaning and emotion that accompanies it. The use of silence in a meeting in some cultures indicates respectful consideration for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid any direct confrontation or direct questions. Keep the other person's feelings in mind. Attempt to avoid conflict as opposed to openly talking about an issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am not comfortable with conflict and prefer to avoid it. I appreciate if you consider my feelings. I value sandwiched feedback, such as what I do well – what needs to be improved – something else I do well.

	<p>what you've said. Do not feel compelled to jump in and fill the silence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never challenge, criticize—or even lavishly praise—an individual in a group setting. • Maintain a harmonious environment in all interactions and exchanges. • Expect to provide a great deal of background information and context for decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I appreciate learning about the context of the message.
<p>Direct Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You prefer directness and authenticity in communications. You are polite but say what you mean and mean what you say. • While it is rude to interrupt someone, silence is uncomfortable. For example, participants in a meeting will talk in sequence, usually acknowledging and continuing the point the previous speaker made. • You prefer information to be given on an "as-needed" basis only. It should be presented, orally or visually, with clarity and brevity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer direct praise, criticism or feedback—even in a public forum like in a meeting or presentation. • Allow people to finish their sentences, do not interrupt. • Assume people will take your criticism as constructive feedback for their professional development. • You hold meetings as a forum for exchanging information, assigning tasks or making decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I value the truth/facts over politeness. • I like messages to be straight forward. • I am OK being called upon when you perceive that I am not walking my talk. • I don't need to know too many contextual details.