



# LAUREA

# The Cross-cultural Introduction in the International Facility Management Program IFMP

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Jouhi, Ari

Nordsten, Sari

Laurea University of Applied Sciences  
Laurea Leppävaara

## The Cross-cultural Introduction in the International Facility Management Program IFMP

Ari Jouhi  
Sari Nordsten  
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Ari Jouhi and Sari Nordsten

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The purpose of this action-based Bachelor's thesis was to develop a concept for an educational event aiming to the increase understanding of culture and cultural differences in an intensive program. The concept was designed to be used in a short-term, intensive program, where fast grouping and effective teamwork are emphasized. The concept was tested in an education event organized as a part of Laurea University of Applied Science's international program called International Facility Management Program.

International Facility Management Program, IFMP, is a six-week study program dealing with topics such as international and strategic facility management, risk management and project management. During the program the students work intensively in multicultural teams. Regardless the long history of IFMP, a multicultural program, cultural issues have not been part of the curriculum, yet misunderstandings between students of different nationalities have occurred. As the work in general continues globalizing and the interaction between different cultures increases, an introduction to working in a multicultural group was considered relevant. The need is emphasized also because of the short term and intensive nature of the program.

The nature of the thesis is qualitative and it is implemented with the methods of action research. The selected theoretical framework created the framework for the content of the educational event itself. The purpose was to organize an educational event, where through discussions the students would create an image of their own culture, the culture of the other participants and how these cultures affect each other. The educational event included lecturing and assignments carried out alone and in a group. The educational event was evaluated by analyzing the content of the made group assignments.

The report of the thesis is made to follow the structure of the given cross-cultural education. First presented is the used theoretical background starting from the basic concept of culture, continuing towards wider cultural concepts. By presenting the theoretical background first, the reader is provided with the necessary terms and key concepts used in the Cross-cultural Introduction.

When reviewing the results, it can be stated that the objectives set for the educational event were partially reached. The theories used supported the educational purpose of the event, even though the inexperience of the lecturers obstructed the understanding and assimilation of the subject taught. A critical viewing of the educational event, used theories and the used methods is essential when evaluating the need and usability of the created concept.

Key words: Culture, multiculturalism, cultural differences, educational event, IFMP

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Tämän toiminnallisen opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli kehittää työkalu, jonka avulla voidaan toteuttaa kulttuurin ja kulttuurien välisten eroavaisuuksien ymmärtämiseen tähtäävä koulutustilaisuus. Työkalua suunniteltiin käytettäväksi ensisijaisesti lyhytkestoisella, intensiivisillä opintojaksoilla, joissa nopean ryhmäytymisen ja sujuvan yhteistyön merkitys korostuvat. Opinnäytetyö toteutettiin koulutustilaisuutena osana Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulun kansainvälistä opintojaksoa nimeltä International Facility Management Program.

International Facility Management Program, IFMP, on kuusiviikkoinen kansainvälinen opintojakso, jonka aihealuita ovat kansainvälinen ja strateginen toimitilajohtaminen, riskijohtaminen ja projektijohtaminen. Opiskelijat työskentelevät intensiivisesti monikulttuurisissa ryhmissä monien lyhytkestoisten projektien parissa. Opintojakson monivuotisen historian aikana kulttuurien välisen ryhmäytymisen merkitystä ei ole huomioitu riittävästi, vaikka eri kulttuurien yhteentörmäyksiltä ei ole välttytty. Työn kansainvälistymisen ja eri kulttuurien välisen vuorovaikutuksen lisääntyessä johdanto monikulttuurisessa ryhmässä työskentelyyn todettiin tarpeelliseksi osaksi opintojaksoa. Tarvetta lisäsi myös opintojakson lyhytkestoisuus ja intensiivisyys.

Opinnäytetyön tutkimus on kvalitatiivinen ja se on toteutettu toimintatutkimuksen keinoin. Kerätty teoriapohja loi kehyksen, joka rajasi koulutustilaisuuden sisällön. Tutkijoiden tavoitteena oli järjestää koulutustilaisuus, jossa keskustelun avulla osallistujille syntyisi mielikuva omasta kulttuurisesta minästä, muiden osallistujien kulttuurista sekä siitä kuinka eri kulttuurit keskustelevat keskenään. Koulutustilaisuuteen sisältyi keskustelemaa luennointia sekä yksin että ryhmässä suoritettuja tehtäviä. Koulutuksen onnistumista arvioitiin ryhmätyötuotoksille suoritettua sisällönanalyysin avulla.

Opinnäytetyön kirjallinen raportointi noudattaa koulutustilaisuuden rakennetta. Lukijalle esitellään käytetty teoriapohja alkaen kulttuurin peruskäsitteestä ja siitä eteenpäin laajempaan kulttuurin käsitteistöön. Teoriapohjan esittely luo pohjan opinnäytetyön tuotteen yhteydessä käytetyn termin ymmärtämiselle.

Arvioitaessa tutkimuksen tuloksia, voidaan todeta, että koulutustilaisuudelle asetetut tavoitteet saavutettiin osittain. Käytetty teoria tuki koulutuksellista tarkoitustaan, joskin luennoitsijoiden kokemattomuus vaikeutti teoriapohjan ymmärtämistä ja sisäistämistä. Koulutustilaisuuden, käytettyjen teorioiden ja metodien kriittinen tarkastelu ovat tärkeässä osassa arvioitaessa työkalun tarpeellisuutta ja käytettävyyttä.

Asiasanat: Kulttuuri, monikulttuurisuus, kulttuuriset erot, koulutustilaisuus, IFMP

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## 1 Introduction

There are only few countries in the world left isolated from the surrounding world. Along globalization the world has become a melting pot for different nationalities and to their characteristics. The work related migration and streams of refugees are affecting to almost every part of the world. Not only the people but also the cultures are mixing. For long it has been said all people being equal; the men and women, the black and white, the young and old, but being equal does not mean being the same. We all are different; starting from the exterior features to the differences in the individual abilities, habits and values also stretching to the cultural differences. The matters defining individual's culture are versatile and complex. The basic knowledge of culture and cultural issues has an important role in understanding the actions of different societies, ethnic groups or working groups. Whenever people from two or more cultures collaborate the culture is involved and should be taken into consideration.

International Facility Management Program, IFMP, is an authentic environment where students from different countries and cultures work together intensively for six weeks. The subjects during the program vary from project management and risk management to in depth studies from the field of facility management. Regardless the long history of the IFMP, a multicultural program, cultural issues has not been part of the curriculum, yet misunderstandings between students of different nationalities have occurred. Emerging from personal learning experiences an introduction to working in a multicultural group was considered relevant especially considering the short-term and intensive nature of the program.

The purpose of the thesis was to develop a concept for introducing culture and cultural differences in an intensive program. The planned concept was implemented as an educational event as a part of the IFMP 2008. This event was given a name *the Cross-cultural Introduction*, and it was build to follow David Pinto's tool "The three-step method to deal with cultural differences. The intended effect of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* was to ease the grouping and give some tools for the conflict resolution by waking up the cultural consciousness of individuals personal and national habits.

## 2 The background of the research

In the following chapters we will present the background of the research. As this practice-based thesis was implemented in an authentic learning situation, it is necessary to explain the background first. The background will also justify the need of the research. The set goals and expected benefits are then introduced. The chosen research methodology is reviewed before the theoretical framework is presented. The chapters are built to lead the reader from the reason to the means.

### 2.1 International Facility Management Program IFMP

The International Facility Management Programme, IFMP, is a six week intensive study program organized in cooperation with the Universities of Applied Sciences of Kufstein, Laurea and Hamburg. The program's partner universities in the Netherlands, Finland and Germany take part to the program by sending students and teachers to participate. Nowadays the IFMP network covers altogether eight Universities of Applied Sciences from four countries.

During the history of over ten years, the course has kept its basic structure of being divided into three two-week sections. Each section is held in different location in various countries. The basic idea is that the program takes place in three different countries hosted by a local partner University. The host University is responsible for the accommodation and the program of the particular section. The amount of the participating students in the IFMP has changed during the years. Within the past few years the amount of participants has been around 20 students.

Each week of the program the students will work on real life cases assigned by a local partner in cooperation. The projects are carried out in teams and the topics focuses on international and strategic facilities management, risk management, event management, and project management. In Laurea University of Applied Science the summer program is directed to the students of either the Security or the Hospitality Management.

The working is intensive and the timelines are tight as the working follows the business hours; the evenings and the weekends are basically leisure time. For each week the timetable is set and it includes lecturing, working and excursions. The students are expected to meet the deadlines within the given time. It means the students need to take the responsibility of the groups work by themselves. The professors and lecturers responsible for the topic will assist and give guidance during each project.

The most beneficial for the students is the gained knowledge about the topics dealt within the projects. The students can practise group work skills and at the same time gain international experience. There is also a chance to improve the language skills in English as it is the official language of the program. For the students it is a unique chance of networking and getting familiar with different cultures and customs of not only each hosting country, but also the fourth participating nation.

The other author of this thesis, Mr. Jouhi has participated in the IFMP in the year 2006. For him, attending the IFMP triggered larger interest for internationalization in the studies. After his international student exchange and gained knowledge of cultural issues he was able to reflect the personal experiences from the IFMP2006. The analysis was written in the spring 2008 as a part of the plan for the thesis. It was used as an argument to justify the need of the thesis. The pieces of his reflection are shown in the thesis to emphasize the effect of lacking knowledge in the real life.

*"As a participant of the International Facility Management Program 2006 the multicultural group work came as a bit of a surprise. During the six weeks of the program the differences between each individual emerged and started to effect more and more on the everyday working. Challenging was the fact that the routines from the work place, the school, followed each other also to the free time spent together". (Jouhi)*

## 2.2 The goals of the thesis

The aim of this practice-based thesis was to organize an educational event for the students of the International Facility Management Program 2008. The educational event was given a name *The Cross-cultural Introduction*, which is as well the name of the thesis. The planned event had two main purposes:

- a) being an introduction to working in a cross-cultural group
- b) to create a framework for a concept to be replicated

These two main purposes will be more widely reviewed in the next two chapters. First the goal 'being an introduction to working in a cross-cultural group' is opened to more concrete sub goals. After that, the goal for the creation of the concept framework is explained.

### 2.2.1 Introducing the cross-cultural work

*"What was new for many was that the students moved around in a group, worked long hours in a group and eventually spent leisure time in a group. One of the taught topics in Austria was 'project management', which concentrated around individual's role in a group work. It was never told or introduced how to apply the given role neither in a group work nor in a multicultural group work." (Jouhi)*



Regarding the objectives concerning the participating students of the IFMP2008, the main purpose of the introduction was to tell them about working in an international, cross-cultural group. To raise cultural awareness the students were introduced with the concepts of culture, a national culture and cultural diversification. As organized in the beginning of the IFMP, *the Cross-cultural Introduction* was also meant to ease the grouping. The aim was to offer some culture related answers in advance and in that way help the students solve possible conflict situations. The intended effect was that the students would be able to talk about issues affecting group work during the six weeks of the program.

The Clackworthy's model of the cultural learning curve (Figure 1) shows the relation between the basic stages of cultural awareness and development in individuals' competences. In the planning of a cross-cultural workshops Clackworthy emphasizes a slowly progressive structure. In the beginning of each workshop the participants has different backgrounds and levels of knowledge. The cultural learning curve is a useful tool in defining the starting levels and also on the follow-up of the progress. (Berger after Clackworthy 1996, 94-95.)

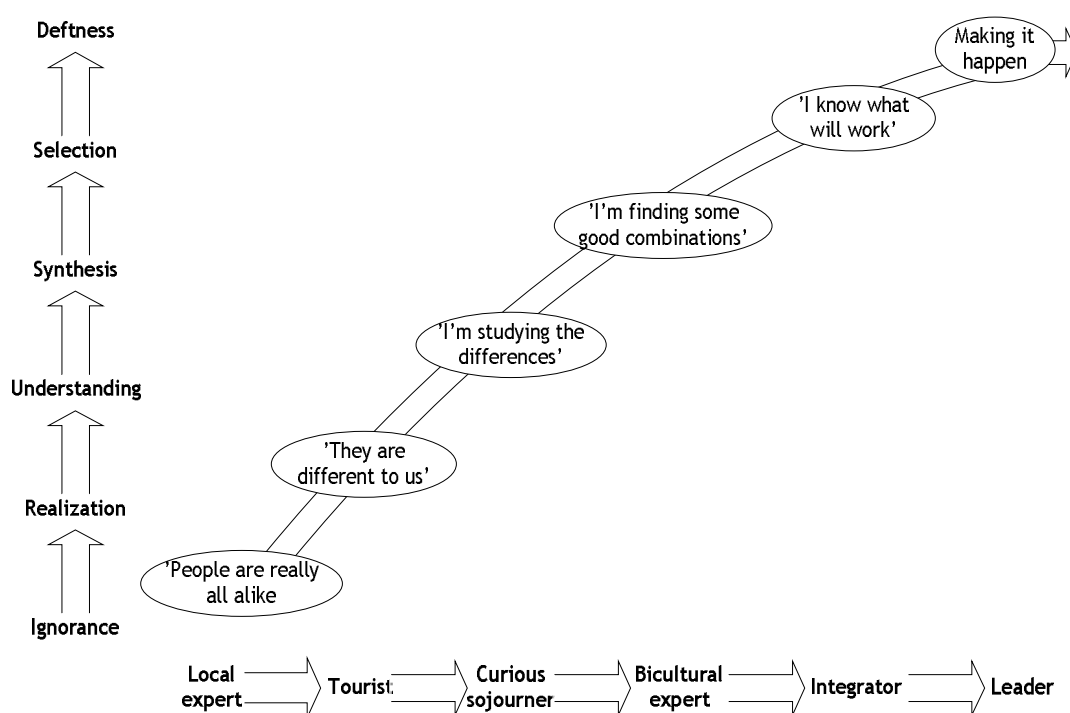


Figure 1: The cultural learning curve (Berger by Clackworthy 1996, 95).

When preparing *the Cross-cultural Introduction* in IFMP2008 the hypothesis was that the students do not separate different cultures from each other; their starting level (Figure 1) was thought to be on the level of 'people are really all alike'. It had to be taken into consideration that the time for the introduction was very limited. That made it impossible to be able to get in depth with the cultural understanding. The students were tried to make to under-

stand that they were working in a multicultural environment which for sure would differ from what they had used to while working or studying; to realize 'They are different to us' (Figure 1).

### 2.2.2 Creating a concept

In the thesis the term '*the Cross-cultural Introduction*' is used to define the concept of the implemented educational event. The theoretical objective of the thesis was to create a concept for an educational event introducing cultural issues in the short-term study modules. The research included planning and executing the event. After the execution an evaluation, conclusions and suggestions for follow-up would be done.

*The Cross-cultural Introduction* was designed to follow David Pinto's "Three Step Method", which will be more widely reviewed later on the chapter 3.5. The concept was planned to include activities, lecturing and guided discussion in a funnel-like structure; the given education would build up from a narrow personal way of thinking to a wider cultural perception. Because of the limited time, the concept would need strict framing and trade-offs on the depth of the given lecturing.

The aim was to create a concept that could be replicated in similar conditions over and over again. The concept and its content should be simple in a way that also a lecturer with less experience from the particular field could carry out the event. Even though the concept would be used in a limited time the content should be extensive and thorough enough. Considering the target group, the concept should offer interesting addition to the study module and not to feel unnecessary extra work. The key thoughts when planning the concept were adaptability, informality, conversational, comprehensive, easy to implement and informative.

## 2.3 The research methods

The nature of the thesis is qualitative. As Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara (2004, 152-154) say, the starting point of qualitative research is to demonstrate the real life. In such research it is essential to notice the real life being diverse; it is important to remember the researched part being affected by other parts of life as well. That is why the target should be studied as comprehensively as the phenomenon is. Almost every field of science holds their own perspectives to the traditions of qualitative research. What is common throughout different fields is that the research is not only a singular project but it is a group of every more versatile research. With all the different uses there is still a unanimous goal for the qualitative research, to rather find or reveal facts than to verify existing alleged truths.

The qualitative research holds many different forms of methods used (Hirsjärvi etc. 2004, 152). The chosen method for the thesis is an action research, which according to Grönfors (1982, 118-119) differs from the traditional method of participating observation with the role of researcher. In the participating observation the researcher joins the studied group and tries to be part of the group by adapting its' actions. In the action research the researcher still being part of the group acts at the same time as a moderator activating the activities.

According to Bloor & Wood (2006, 10) action research suits well for sociological study as the purpose of the research is to first identify issues, gather information and then look at possible solutions concerning the community or organization researched. An anthropological research studies sociological phenomena. As organizing an educational event where the lecturers participates in the discussion and at the same time making observation the action research is the most suitable method for this thesis.

Another method used in the thesis is content analysis. In qualitative research content analysis is used in describing the content of documents. The documents are examined by seeking occurrences of different sought characteristics in one or more documents. The approach provides objective results when it is done systematically examining the transparent objective and concentrating only on the mean document. (Bloor and Wood 2006, 58, after Jupp and Norris 1993.) In the thesis the content analysis is used to find out if there were any correlations between the students' work and Hofstede's findings on the particular culture.

The final product of a practice-based thesis is always something concrete; whether it is a book, a manual, an info package, a portfolio, a fair stand or an event, the documentation needs to meet the standards of the particular field of study and the guidelines of the educational institute (Vilkka & Airaksinen 2004, 51). In this research, writing (Bloor & Wood 2006, 187) is used as a method in documenting the research as thoroughly as possible. This written report is build up by first introducing the subject. The used theories are then explained to help the reader to understand the later analysis. The implementation of the concept and the results are reviewed and analysed basing on the theories used. Finally the suggestions for the future are presented. This kind of consistently progressive structure is typical style of reporting in qualitative research based on empirical study (Bloor & Wood 2006, 187).

### 3 Managing cultural differences

In the following chapters we will introduce theoretical approaches to define culture and cultural differences. The aim is to clarify the concept of culture and its complexity. The presented theories of cultural differences stress different approaches towards time and space, cultural structures and basic value sets.

Culture is often seen as art, high education and literature. In broader meaning, culture is something that we learn from the living community we live in; from our parents, from our neighbors and from our colleagues. The way we feel, think and even act are all formed into patterns learned throughout our lives, starting from the early childhood. Hofstede compares these patterns of one's thinking, feeling and acting to programming computers. He states, that the way of one's behavior is not ready programmed in one's mind, but these mental programs we have learned will indicate what reactions are likely and understandable. (Hofstede 1997, 4-5.)

Hofstede (1997, 5) and Hall (1981, 16) both describe culture as a collective, shared and learned phenomenon. Culture is not something that comes along with your genes, it is learned from and shared with the people you live or have lived within the same social environment. Hall states that each part of human life is somehow influenced by culture. He means that culture effects to all parts of our lives; to how we show our emotions, to our way of thinking, to our personality and to the way we solve problems and handle changes. Culture is seen in our everyday life; in the way we greet each other: with kisses or by nodding from longer distance, in the way we address our speech to others or how we dress ourselves in business life. It is common to human nature to know how to hate, love, feel fear, happiness and sadness, but it depends of the culture what we do with these feelings. (Hofstede 1997, 5; Hall 1981, 16.)

There are 194 independent countries in the world (U.S. Department of State, 2009) therefore 194 national cultures can be identified. There are more to define culture, than just national borders. For example religions, languages and geographic areas form groups with their special characters and culture. Within these groups people differ as well. Different genders, different socio-economical backgrounds, different nationalities and sex orientations can occur; the individuals do not carry identical values and norms and do not have similar behavioral characteristics. According to Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997, 24-25) these differences within a culture still meet the average of the culture. He calls this spread of behavioral patterns as "normal distribution" and to define cultural differences, we need to set the limits to the values where another culture ends and the other one starts.

Hofstede (1997, 9), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997, 22) represent the concept of culture as an onion diagram (Figure 2). The onion diagram shows how a new culture opens up for a person not familiar with the particular culture. The more familiar one gets with the new culture the more one can understand and 'read' it. As Trompenaars' model show, a culture's *explicit* characteristics are on the outer layer. Closer to the core, more explaining of the particular characteristics is needed as the issues tend to be even highly implicit.

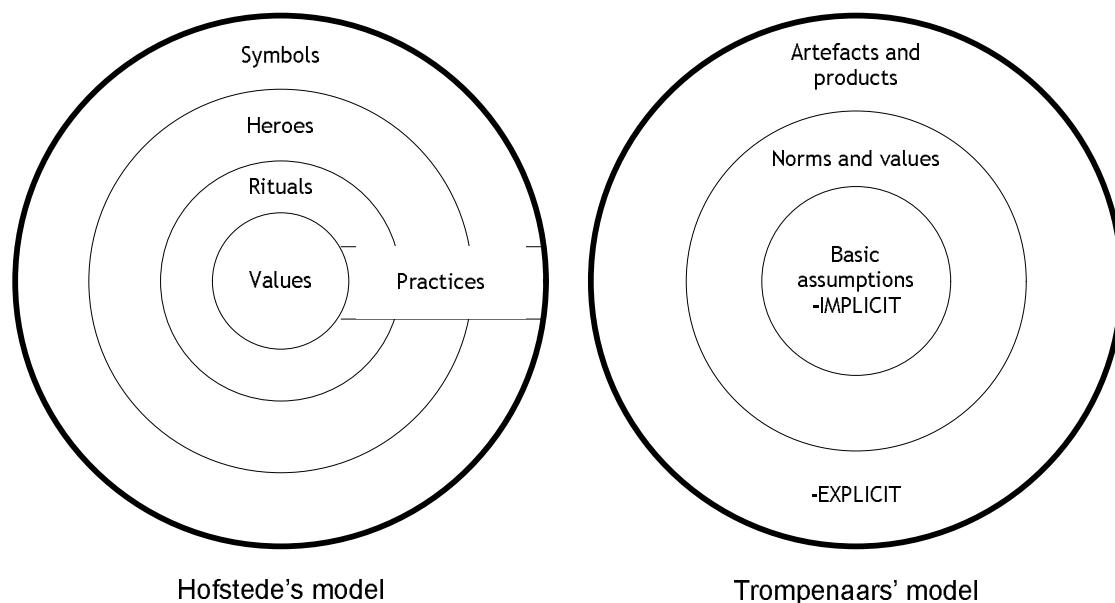


Figure 2: The layers of culture (Hofstede 1997, 9; Trompenaars 1993, 23)

As arriving to a new country the first things one experiences are the buildings, clothes and for example different gestures local people use. That is the first layer of the culture what we experience, the first impression. The both onions are similar in the sense they both show the culture to be introvert concept. The outer layers are built up from tangible and visible attributes that need only little explanation. The more the core is revealed, the more complex the explaining of it is.

The outer layers of the onion: rituals, heroes and symbols are visible to an observer outside of the culture. Religious ceremonies are good example of rituals as they give an idea of the importance of the event within the group in which the ceremony takes place. On the second outer layer of culture are heroes, which can be real or imaginary figures of special importance within the given culture. In Finnish culture for example Väinämöinen and Paavo Nurmi can be seen as heroes. The outer layer includes symbols of the culture. These symbols can be words, gestures, dress codes, meal types etc. They all have a particular meaning which can be recognized by people from the same culture. (Hofstede 1997, 7-9.)

The cores of the onions are formed by the basic values we hold. Many of our values are influencing to our behavior unconsciously. They express what we really believe in, for example what is right and what is wrong, and the attitude towards the most important factors in our lives. As some of our values are learned in early childhood, we do not know them to exist. That is why they are difficult to describe and they cannot be seen by outsiders. (Hofstede 1997, 8-9; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1997, 23.) Laroche and Rutherford (2007, 6-11) explain the implicitness of a culture with an iceberg analogy; only 10% of an iceberg is above the sea level and can be seen, the rest of the 90% is below the surface and out of sight. The analogy supports both Hofstede's and Trompenaars' views of the introspective nature of a culture.

The tip of an iceberg and the outer layers of the onion are exterior, tangible attributes that can be seen, felt and perceived with the five senses a person has. The exterior characteristics are something an outsider can fairly easy to react because they are seen, felt or experienced. The invisible and intangible things like values or thought patterns created during decades cause more problems to outsiders like for example to the immigrants. Learning and adapting a culture's implicit characteristics is impossible by using only the senses because the matters cannot be observed directly. To understand the implicit factors of a culture, Laroche and Rutherford (2007, 7) say that inferences needs to be done from what people say and do. The tangible and intangible factors needs to be put together and by inferring and interpreting some conclusions of a culture's deepest attributes can be made.

### 3.1 Perceiving the context and the time in different cultures

Edward T. Hall was an American anthropologist who was specialized on the non-verbal communication. Hall represented classifications of cultures, based on the link between content and context that characterizes the culture and the inter-cultural communication. His strongest contribution to cross-cultural research was to develop the grouping of the *High context* and the *Low context cultures*. The other major theme for Hall was time and how he described the structure of it to be either *Polychronic* or *Monochronic*. Hall's theories about the context and the time are considered fundamental and they are still widely referred and extended in the modern cross-cultural research. (Lewis 1999; Pinto 2000, 35; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1997, 124; Hofstede & Hofstede 2005).

#### 3.1.1 The context of the communication

Hall presented (1981) the distribution of *High context culture* and *Low context culture* to describe the content of speech and communication. Whether there is a high or a low amount

of content in the basic day-to-day communication, the cultures can be classified and compared. The amount of used content depends on how much explanation for different relations is needed; how the message is meant to be understood and how the recipient understands it.

In the high context cultures like for example in Pacific Asian, Arabic and Mediterranean countries close personal relationships are made among the extended family, friends, colleagues and clients. In business for example, knowing the business partner is necessary before doing any business with. Building a relationship creates trust, and when someone is trusted he can be attached to the extended network. Within the network of trusted people there are neither requirements nor expectations for deep background information. That does not mean that there would a lack of communication. On a contrary, people keep their selves always informed and aware of what is happening to the people close to them. By being always aware of the circumstances less explanation is needed. The messages are understood by the relations of life, religion and general common ground. (Hall & Hall 1990, 6-10; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1997, 89-90.)

The low context cultures, for example American, German, Swiss and Scandinavian cultures, tend to more short-term relations; the business comes before pleasure. The content of the message itself is considered to be more important than the communication between people. When the content is clear enough it is the recipients' responsibility to understand the meaning. The emphasis is on the message as what is said is meant; what is not said is not necessary. The different aspects of life are compartmentalized and every occasion of communication requires specific background information. The background knowledge is needed to understand the circumstances so that the message can be bind into correct context. By understanding the context, the correct assumptions of the given message can be done. (Hall & Hall, 1990, 6-10; Lahtinen & Isoviita, 2001, 2).

### 3.1.2 The sense of time

Hall presents two different ways how people outline their attitudes towards time and space. Monochronic time stresses schedules. A good example is how we see meetings and other events as well as friends and family as parts or segments which we must fit to our daily schedules. If there are more to fit, priorities must be set and less important matters can be left out. Hall describes monochronic time to be linear road going forwards to the future and backwards to the past. He noticed that monochronic people treat time as tangible thing, that can saved, spent, waste and even run out of. Time has become a frame on which everything else is built. Countries with a monochronic time are for example Germany, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries. (Hall 1981, 17-19; Hall & Hall 1990, 13-17; Lahtinen & Isoviita 2001, 2).

In polychronic time several things are happening at the same time. Time is not seen so tangible as in monochronic time extent. The focus is on people and processes, not on schedules. Appointments can be lightly rescheduled and it is common, that important plans are changed in the last minutes. (Hall 1981, 17-18). The time is seen cyclical. Typical polychronic cultures are for example the Latin American and African countries, Greece and the Pacific Asian countries like Japan, China, Thailand and Vietnam (Lahtinen & Isoviita, 2001, 2).

MONOCHRONIC PEOPLE	POLYCHRONIC PEOPLE
do one thing at a time	do many things at once
concentrate on the job	are highly distractible and subject to interruptions
take time commitments (deadlines, schedules) seriously	consider time commitments an objective to be achieved, if possible
are low-context and need information	are high-context and already have information
are committed to the job	are committed to people and human relationship
adhere religiously to plans	change plans often and easily
are concerned about not disturbing the others; follow rules of privacy and consideration	are more concerned with those who are closely related (family, friends, close business associates) than with privacy
show great respect for private property; seldom borrow or lend	borrow and lend things often and easily
emphasize promptness	base promptness on the relationship
are accustomed to short-term relationships	have strong tendency to build lifetime relationships

Table 1: Examples of the differences (Hall & Hall 1990, 15)

The examples of the differences (Table 1) between the monochronic and polychronic people are taken to the extreme. Often in cultural theories the examples given reflect only the extreme opposites as most of the people are actually somewhere in between the ends. But as shown like that they give us a very good picture of the possible differences. Knowing the differences becomes critical in a situation when the monochronic and polychronic people are making business together; the irritation is inevitable if the customs of the others are neither recognized nor acknowledged. A polychronic Latin American might see the Scandinavian way of doing one thing at a time being inflexible and inefficient. At the same time the Latin American inability to commit to schedules and the way of performing multiple tasks at the same time might be considered chaotic by the monochronic Scandinavians. (Lahtinen & Isoviita 2001, 2).



### 3.2 The cultural structures/ F- and C -structures

Pinto says, “There are differences not only between groups of local and foreign people, but also within groups of local and foreign people”. To not only focus on intercultural differences and on cultural dimensions, he tried to identify the truly fundamental differences, which do not only show as differences between cultures, but also as intracultural differences between people within one culture. He pointed out the diversity of people in a group; how we differ for example in age, sex orientation, ethnic background and religion. Pinto’s categorization of cultures is based on the structure of rules of interaction and communication codes. (Pinto 2000, 37.)

Pinto (2000, 37-38) sees cultural structures as continuum, where on the other end is Fine – mesh structures, F-structures, which represents cultures with tight structure of detailed rules and codes. On the opposite is Coarse – mesh structure, C-structure, which indicates loose structure of global rules and codes. Between F and C lies the Mixed structure. The M-structure has characteristics from both structures mentioned before.

Differences between norms and values can be found when comparing F- and C –structures. In cultures with an F-structure, people are more group-orientated. They do not participate in to the society by their own decisions; the group defines the basis of participation. In cultures with C-structure, people are seen as individuals with personal freedom. In F-culture loyalty towards family is much stronger than towards business associates and even friends. A family member is seen most trustable and best colleague candidate. (Pinto 2000, 40-41.)

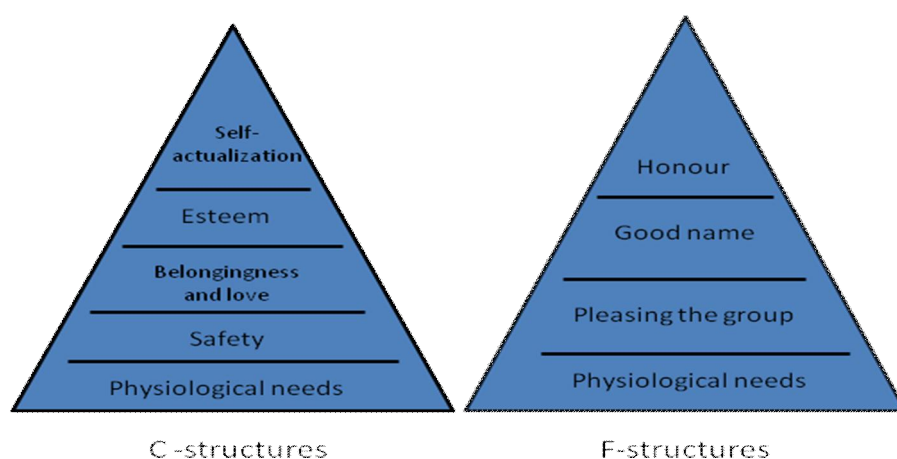


Figure 3: The pyramid of basic human needs in F- and C-structures (Pinto 2000, 68)

Psychologist Abraham Maslow (1998) was first to introduce the pyramid of basic human needs. The pyramid describes different categorized levels of needs in human life. In order to reach

the next level, the previous needs have to be fulfilled. Pinto (2000, 68) noticed that Maslow's pyramid illustrates the basic needs for people in C-structured cultures and the model does not describe cultures with F-structure at all. By building a pyramid model for F-cultures (Figure 3), he illustrates the cultural differences existing even in the stage of basic human needs. Where income, belonging to social groups, social status, self-respect and creativity are important in C-cultures, politeness, honorable behavior, appreciation of others and avoiding a loss of face rises up in F-cultures.

### 3.3 The dimensions of national culture

In this chapter Hofstede's theory of the dimensions of national culture is presented. The theory played a huge part in the theoretical framework built for the functional part of the thesis. The basic concept as well as each dimension of theory is explained with figures showing the scores of each countries participating in International Facility Management Program.

A Dutch social anthropologist Geert Hofstede found the *dimensions of national culture*. During the years 1967-1973 Hofstede studied a vast amount of survey data collected from the employees of IBM. The data was about the values of the people. The link between these people was the employer, IBM, but far most important was that the data was collected from over fifty countries around the world. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 22-25, 435.)

Hofstede created a way to calculate a numerated value for the answers given for the questions about values. Analyzing the results and comparing them to previous anthropological problems and assumptions, he found common denominators in four different areas. These four areas later turned into four dimensions of national culture. In the context Hofstede says the dimension being "an aspect of a culture that can be measured relative to other cultures." Hofstede named the dimensions power distance, collectivism versus individualism, femininity versus masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 22-25.)

Hofstede and Hofstede (2005, 16-19) remind that the national dimension of culture should not to be used to define an individual. The dimensions are to define a nation's typical characteristics. For many cases the individual's values can differ from its national ones, which is natural result of individuality. A lot of divergences can be seen between different geographical regions. One fundamental thing causing diversity is religion, which often defines the basic values of a society. The other reason for diversity is the economical situation of a nation; some characteristics are more common in western developed countries as some in the areas economically unstable.

### 3.3.1 The power distance index

The *Power Distance Index*, PDI, measures peoples' attitudes towards inequalities. In every nation the power in organizations and in the society is divided unequally. The PDI indicates how people in different cultures tolerate the fact that all are not equal. For some it is natural to have a strict chain of command where the first truth is the only truth. On the other side people might think their only option is to challenge the first decision. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 41-72.)

The PDI indicates different kinds of dependence relationships in countries. In the countries with a large PDI, the organizations needs a strict hierarchy as with the countries with small index the hierarchy is more for convenience. In the cultures with small power distance the bosses are closer to their subordinates and the atmosphere supports discussion. On the other side in the large power distance cultures the gap between the boss and the subordinates is big. The bigger the gap is, the more unlikely it is that a subordinate will approach and challenge bosses decision. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 45-46.)

The value of status is associated with the PDI dimension. In the large PDI countries, superiors are respected and their power is justified. They are expected to do the decisions by themselves and in a paternalistic way. On the contrary in the countries with a small power distance a more consultative and equal decision making is preferred; the status is considered only to be symbolic. Therefore in the small PDI organization less supervisory personnel appears. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 41-59.)

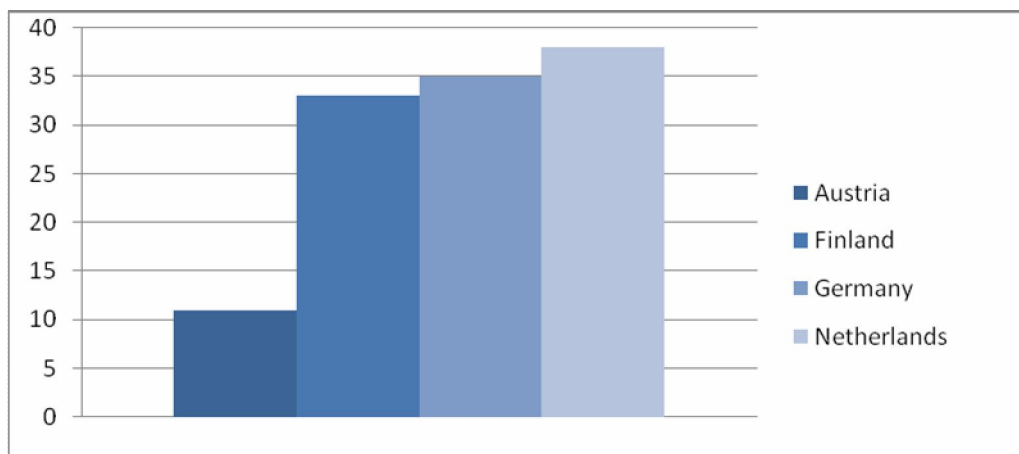


Figure 4: The power distance index (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 43-44)

The Power distance scores of the countries participating in the IFMP are shown in the Figure 4. The only bigger difference is the low score of Austria. In Hofstede's survey Austria ranked

to have the lowest PDI, score 11, of all the surveyed countries, the highest score is for Malaysia counting up to 104. In the comparison the difference between the four countries is mainly an optical illusion. When compared to the whole survey data The European countries and especially the Scandinavian countries appears to have a low PDI. Finland, Germany and the Netherlands situate on the lower third of the all survey scores. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 43-44.)

### 3.3.2 The collectivism versus Individualism

The dimension of the *collectivism versus individualism*, IDV, compares peoples' relations towards each others. The IDV defines individuals' role in the society against the role of the group. As in the individualist culture, a person has obligation to one's self, in a collectivist culture the obligations are to a group. Individualist societies have been said to be guilt cultures as the collectivists are shame cultures. The shame is felt in the society as the guilt is more personal and suffered in one's own mind. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 74-114.)

A known cultural anthropological term *extended family* is related to the IDV. A difference between the two ends of individualism versus collectivism is already in the family structures. In the individualist culture family refers to parents and possible siblings. In the collectivist cultures the family has a wider extended meaning; practically everybody close to a child is part of the family. With the extended family the child is brought up to a group and to think in order of 'we'. In the individualist cultures the nuclear families live in one place and the relatives in another. The child is brought up teaching the meaning of individual characteristics, so it creates 'I' thinking already early on. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 74-75.)

According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005, 89) Edward T. Hall's definitions of high-context and low-context communication within cultures are easily applied to individualist and collectivist cultures. A collectivist culture refers to high-context communication where a lot of information is already out open in the context of the situation. In low-context communication time and words are used to explain the message as clear as possible. For individualist culture it is important to have a clear well explained context in order to avoid misunderstandings.

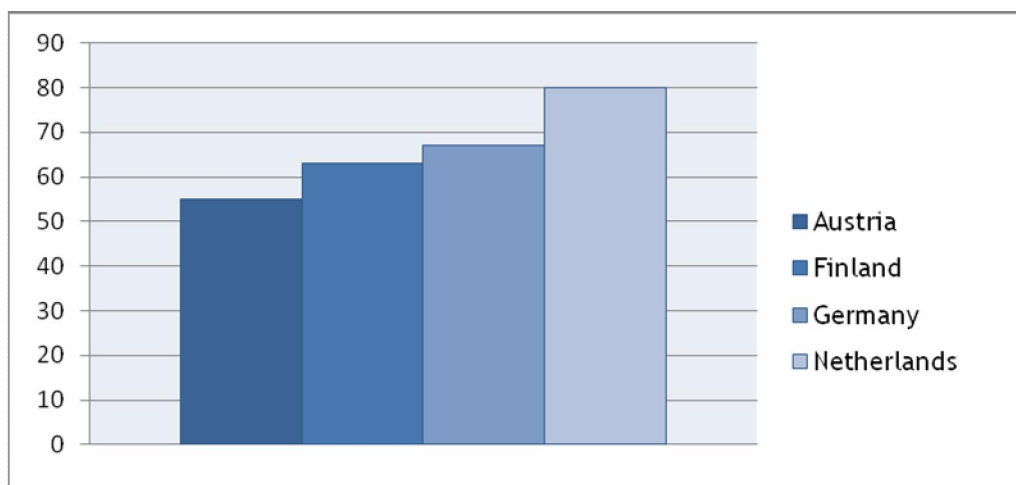


Figure 5: The Individuality vs. collectivism (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 78-79)

In the comparison between 74 countries the participants of the IFMP situate on the higher third, the Netherlands standing out being on the top six of all. As the Figure 5 shows, the four countries are quite close to each other preferring individualistic values. Hofstede's study shows the western industrial societies prefer more individualistic values as the collectivism is more common in the eastern developing countries. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 78-79.)

### 3.3.3 The masculinity versus Femininity

The third dimension of the national cultures is the *masculinity versus femininity*, MAS. Whether we wanted it or not, the gender roles have existed from across the World since the beginning of mankind. Different kinds of descriptions and believes related on men and women have developed early on from the basic needs and abilities they had; women gave birth and nurtured the children as the men were hunting food or protecting ones territory. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 116-118.)

The nature created the biological differences between men and women, and at the same time it dictated the responsibilities as well. From the survey data Hofstede was able to distinguish that also the cultural differences existed between the genders. In a society, masculine values are toughness and competitiveness, goal oriented performing and a will for material success. Feminine values are softer, more modest and focused to care about the quality of life. That reflects to the attitude towards work; in masculine society people live to work as in the feminine society people work in order to live. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 120.)

Both masculine and feminine values do exist in every culture and they overlap each other. Some men have more *feminine* approach to life as some women are competing of success and glory, the *masculine* attributes. When looked at a society the individuals are not counted, but

the value set of the whole population is considered. If a society is called masculine or feminine depends on how alike the society's men and women are. If the values of the both gender are close to each other a society is more feminine. The further the values of men and women are, more masculine the society is considered. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 119-125.)

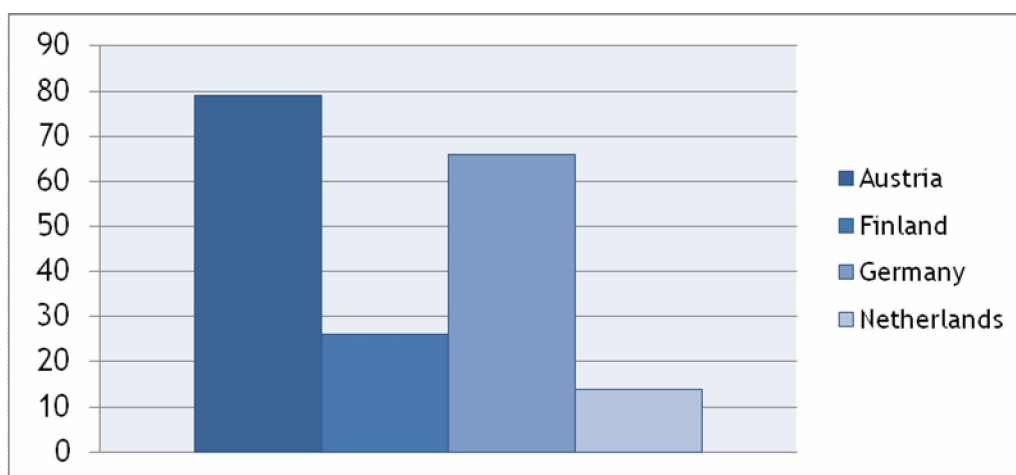


Figure 6: The masculinity vs. femininity (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 120-121)

The masculinity versus femininity values (Figure 6) shows the biggest deviation between the participating countries. Austria and Germany have high values on masculinity situating in the top 13 of all the countries Hofstede surveyed. On the contrary Finland and the Netherlands are among the seven countries having the most feminine value set. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 120-121.)

#### 3.3.4 The Uncertainty avoidance

The fourth dimension of the national culture is the *Uncertainty avoidance*, UAI. It reflects how the society tolerates unplanned, unstructured and unknown situations. It means how people think about uncertain moments; if they feel it as a threat or just as a part of life. In the strong UAI societies people need a solid foundation on their life. The society builds its structures by laws and regulations leaving not much room for failure. In the societies where the UAI is weak people are more relaxed and the stress level is lower; uncertain moments are accepted. Only few rules are needed, so that the society would not limit risk taking or dissent opinions. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 167-176.)

In a learning situation Hofstede experienced the UAI in practice when teaching the teachers in the International Teachers Program. The different approaches of the strong- and the weak-UAI countries were obvious. The countries with a stronger UAI preferred structured and detailed assignments; the approach is straightforward and less options and possible results are

searched. As the countries with a weaker UAI the approach is rambling and there is more discussion on the matter. The findings could also be applied in the working environment as the strong UAI organizations needs strong determined superiors. In the weak UAI organizations it is acceptable for the superior not to know everything. The superior can be seen as a moderator who encourages and guides the subordinates. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 178-186.)

When describing the main differences between the strong and the weak UAI cultures, Hofstede reminds the examples used represents only the extreme examples. From the surveyed data, it was noticed that only few countries were in the extreme ends, but most situated somewhere in the middle. That means many countries sharing some characteristics yet being totally different in some aspects. Therefore Hofstede emphasizes the essence of uncertainty being an individual feeling, a subjective experience. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 165, 176.)

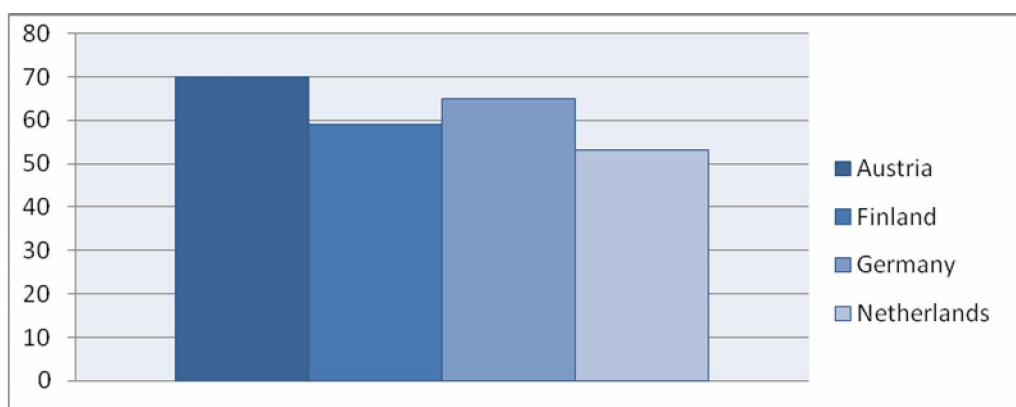


Figure 7: The uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 168-169)

By the Hofstede (Figure 7) scores a conclusion of the four IFMP participants being fairly comfortable with uncertainties can be made. The derivation is only marginal as the countries are situated in the lower third of fourth of all surveyed countries. In the comparison of all survey having a low score means weak tolerance against uncertain situations. For example Denmark has a weak tolerance with a score of 23. On a contrary of the IFMP countries Austria's score 70 indicates that uncertain situations are tolerated fairly well. As Hofstede compared the results of all the countries, he found the previous grouping of western and eastern cultures did not apply to the UAI, but the grouping to be divided into smaller regional areas not depending on the location. It means that cultures with weak UAI can be found all over the world as well as the strong UAI cultures. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 168-169.)

### 3.3.5 Long-term versus Short-term orientation

After the IBM survey, Hofstede and other researchers worked on a different survey, still having similar study question and dilemma as in Hofstede's original study. The analysis of the new results showed comparability to three of the dimensions of the national culture. There was no correlation found to the fourth dimension of the UAI. From the new data Hofstede added the fifth dimension *long-term versus short-term orientation*, which was more equivalent to the new surveys. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 29-31.)

The dimension of the long-term versus short-term orientation, LTO, presents societies attitude towards time and heritage. According to Hofstede & Hofstede (2005, 212-223) the short-term oriented cultures tend to be hasty and up-tempo when results are expected. The long-term orientation follows more persistent patterns of actions that take time in order to get sustainable results. A clear deviation can be pointed out between the short- and long-term oriented regions in the world, the eastern and the western world.

The long history of respecting the ancestors and the traditions is present in the eastern cultures. It is characteristic for a long-term oriented culture to build relationships to last forever, work and learn in adaptive and honest way, as also being held accountable and self-disciplined. The western cultures are more short-term oriented expecting quick profit on business. In work the short-term oriented cultures tend to appreciate freedom and rights, still believing in individual's achievement. In decision making and in general discussion the long-term cultures seem to be more forgiving allowing disagreement. In the short-term cultures there is a need and search for consistent agreement, and rationality in thinking is valued. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 225-232.)



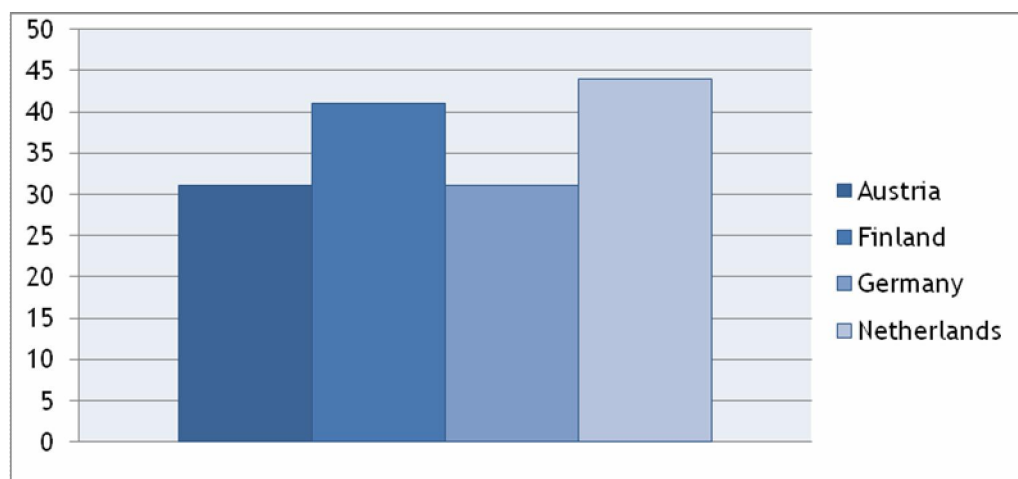


Figure 8: The long-term vs. short-term orientation (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 211)

As being added later the LTO dimension has fewer countries included than the original dimensions. Only 39 countries have been studied and scores calculated. In Hofstede's results the European countries are situated in the middle of the range, including the IFMP participants. As for comparison the score for Hong Kong is 96. As with the other dimensions, the LTO scores (Figure 8) show fairly similar scores on value sets when compared Austria, Finland, Germany and the Netherlands. (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 211.)

### 3.4 The culture shock

The term 'culture shock' was first introduced by Kalervo Oberg (1954, 1). At the beginning it was attached to foreign working assignments, where a worker was transferred abroad to work in a foreign culture. Nowadays as the worldwide movement of travelers, students and especially migrants has increased, the established interpretation of the term has reflects the situation where a new culture is experienced with an unpleasant surprise. Pires, Stanton and Ostenfeld (2006, 158) brings up the fact that as well as an international assignment the migration sets people in a situation of starting a new life in a new strange place; often the migrants are forced to start even from a worse foundation. The culture shock is not only a business problem anymore. It can occur in all the layers of the societies and stages of life around the world.

*"The second part of the IFMP, two weeks in Kufstein Austria, brought the cultural issues more into the front. As all the students lived in under the same roof in the International Student Residence, more conflicting differences arose. In Finland the working had been done only at the university, but now also the housing facilities were used as a working environment. The change was considerable, as the time spent together among the multicultural working was doubled. Reduced free time and lacking feeling of personal intimacy increased individual pressures and created tensions." (Jouhi)*

According to Marx (1999, 5-6) Oberg saw the cause and effect relation between the symptoms and the process of entering to a new culture. He was the first to explain the process of adapting a new and different culture. A culture shock arises when an individual's personal values, habits and norms are met by different set of values, habits and norms by another culture. The shock is experienced when people face the reality of the set prejudices and expectations are not meeting in the real life. Oberg defined six major aspects of the culture shock:

- *Strain* caused by the effort to adapt
- *Sense of loss and feelings of deprivation* in relation to friends, status, profession and possessions
- *Feeling rejected* by or rejecting members of the new culture
- *Confusion* in role, values and self-identity
- *Anxiety and even disgust/anger* about 'foreign' practices
- *Feelings of helplessness*, not being able to cope with the new environment

*"An additional problem came up when just a few days before returning the final reports the whole class got a new guideline to assemble a unified report instead of three separate. That increased the pressures of everybody because all the groups had done the work individually till that day. Everybody seemed very disappointed and frustrated at that moment. One was able to sense the air thickening; in a way, the students were waiting the end of the program and the return to the personal daily routines."* (Jouhi)

Hofstede (2005, 400) notes that the culture shock can cause even "symptoms of physical illness". Both Hofstede (2005, 323-325) and Marx (1999, 3-11) emphasize the real concern about the preparation for a foreign assignment and the facing of new cultures. They both warn that neglecting the symptoms usually causes problems to the project and may even lead to premature termination of the assignment. The six aspects of the culture shock mentioned above are feelings a person might feel when facing a foreign culture; they do not necessarily mean that one suffers from a culture shock. Once suffered culture shock does not mean a person to have it with every expatriate mission, nor does it indicate any percentages for the project to fail or succeed.

In business the culture shock is usually attached into a long term foreign assignments. But as over the years the business has changed faster, also the nature of foreign projects are shortened. That has led to a fact the symptoms of the culture shock can be experienced even in short-term assignments. (Marx 1999, 5-11; Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 324.) The length of the assignment is no more a factor, on a contrary; the shorter the time is, more essential it is to be able to function well with the circumstances.

### 3.4.1 The stages of adaptation

*“At the first weeks the problems did not seem to be important or even problems because of the individual flexibility. The disturbing matters were thought to be individual habits or even just negative characteristics of that particular person. Different habits and methods were managed either by adapting to those or just accepting them and trying to survive with them. (Jouhi)”*

Figure 9 shows the stages of the process of adapting to a new culture by Oberg. Marx's extension to the 'Stages of adaptation' is shown in the Figure 10 and reviewed later. Oberg found four phases that an expatriate goes through when adapting to a new culture. His thought about the model was that the cycle starts all over again. The process will continue from adjustment via honeymoon to face the culture shock and to start the recovery phase again. Oberg (2004) did not set any specific timeline or duration on the phases, saying the phases to last whatever from few weeks up to six months. Marx suggests that the adaptation period depend on the culture and how close it is to the expatriates own; the further the new culture is, the longer is the adaptation process. The social context through expatriate colleagues and host country nationals and the personal abilities are also factors on affecting to the length of the adaptation. (Marx 1999, 7-10)

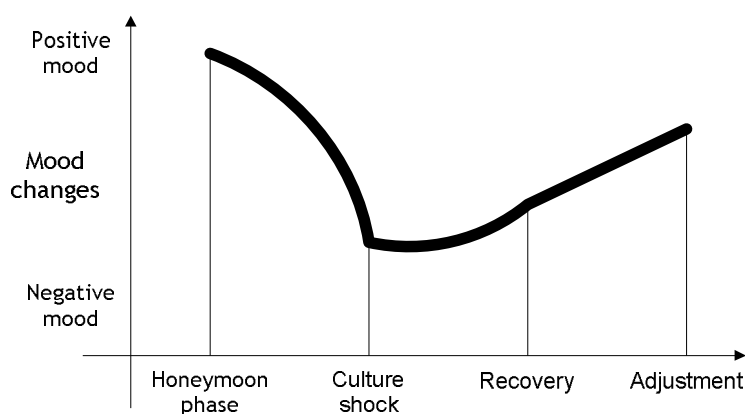


Figure 9: Stages of adaptation (Marx 1999, 9, by Oberg 1960)

The first phase of the adaptation (Figure 9) is the *Honeymoon phase*. At the beginning of the foreign assignment all the new things like for example co-workers, surroundings and work tasks are interesting and inspiring. The new situation is seen to provide endless amount of opportunities, the new experiences feel exciting, the general mood is positive and the new environment is stimulating. At this stage some irritating matters are held back and under-rated by focusing on the positive aspects of the situation. The negative feelings are suffo-

cated with the attraction of the new positive matters. The impact and meaning of the negative issues are considered too small. (Marx 1999, 7.)

*"During the first two weeks in Finland the participants were still new to each other and a bit shy among the whole group of 15 students. Because of that there was a polite atmosphere where teams were building up and students trying to get to know each other. The main problems at the first weeks concerned the reporting of the assignments; yet everyone was allowed for their own opinion and all the aspects were taken into consideration in creating the context for the report. The group work was gentle and mindful." (Jouhi)*

After the honeymoon phase, the *Culture shock* might strike. The matters previously felt positive loses their effect and the reality starts to set in. Disorientation over the work, local habits and life in foreign country as whole, might take over as the familiar social context is lost. If the working habits differs a lot, a feeling of everybody else working the wrong way might end up to a point where a person starts to hate everything foreign. The constant uncomfortable feeling usually leads to the stage of distress and nervous collapse. How people manage in this stage is completely personal and up to one's personal capabilities. (Marx 1999, 8.) Culture shock itself is not a medical condition, but awareness of the reason behind the possible symptoms can ease the recovery (Oberg 1954, 9).

*"In the following weeks the irritating factors erupted at least within the Finnish participants. Between the Finns the students spoke about how they felt for some things and some other students. There was talk about annoying things, feelings of being offended by others' actions and about the general ill feeling concerning the situation. Not all the bad feeling was because of the other students, but because of the new situation of being far away from home. The feeling of general insecurity and lack of self confidence were present and affected on some Finnish students." (Jouhi)*

The third phase in the Figure 9 and the Figure 10 is the *Recovery* phase. The recovery from the culture shock can only start if it is recognized and admitted. At this stage a person has to clarify the set prejudices for the foreign assignment and agree with the necessary compromises between the personal expectations and reality. The more precisely the irritating matters are identified the easier it is to find solutions and compromises. Oberg (1954, 9) emphasizes the meaning of compatriots that has been in the country for longer or previously; talking about the cultural differences might ease the burden and help the 'patient' to understand his/her feelings better. The recovery phase requires a lot of dedication and work in order to succeed.

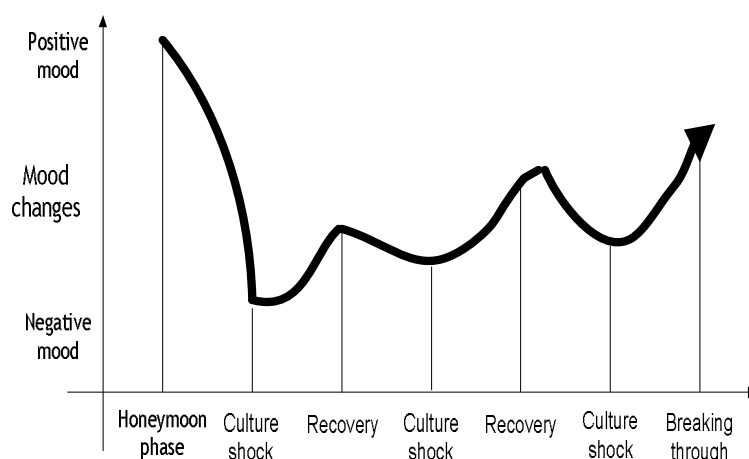


Figure 10: Breaking through culture shock (Marx 1999, 10)

Marx has extended Oberg's model. The first three phases are the same, but Marx draws a different redo loop on it. She has found out that often after the adjustment phase comes a new culture shock. In the model (Figure 10) she replaces the 'adjustment' with another culture shock and a recovery phase. She does not state how many setbacks might occur, but believes to the eventual 'break through' in adaptation of the new culture. (Marx 1999, 7-10.)

As in Oberg's model the fourth phase is the *Adjustment*, Marx's cycle sets a new culture shock in front. In a way they both mean the same as talking about adjusting one's actions towards cultural cohesion. Marx said the process will start all over again as she states the new culture shock will appear without a new honeymoon phase. Eventually adjusting to cultural differences or breaking through the shock means the person understands the situation and is able to work and be in it. One gets used to the new habits and customs, yet maintaining personal identity. It is about being able to tolerate differences and being able to understand the different methods of the others. In order to complete the adaptation, a person has to take actions with the compromises set on the recovery phase. A successful applying of the new methods and thoughts to real life enables the work to go on effectively and usually more flexibly. (Marx 1999, 8; Oberg 2004.)

#### 3.4.2 Managing the culture shock

Marx (1999, 11-18) states that hers and Oberg's models of the adaptation phases only illustrates the emotional cycle of the culture shock. As Oberg has listed specific symptoms of the culture shock, Marx separated three factors to illustrate it. In her experience a culture shock needs to be dealt in three different levels; by *thinking*, adjusting *social skills and identity*

and dealing with the *emotions*. She presents the interaction between these aspects as a triangle shown in the Figure 11.

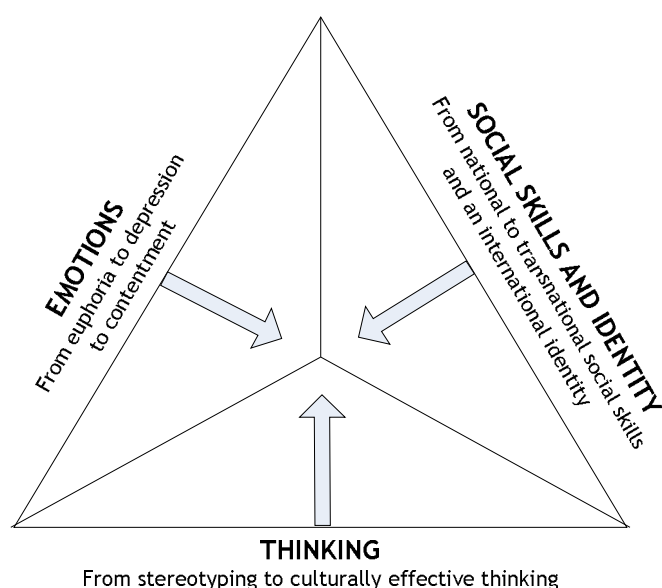


Figure 11: The culture shock triangle (Marx 1999, 12)

Emotionally sad and stressed person is more likely to be quiet and held back in social situations as compared to satisfied and happy person. Socially failed situation can lead to mistaken thinking about the overall situation. That is what Marx's triangle illustrates; in order to be able to function well in cross-cultural situation, a person should consider ones actions from three angles. Each side form the triangle has an effect on a person. For that reason one should be able to adjust the actions to find the balance between them. (Marx 1999, 11-13.)

Marx (1999, 13-14) suggests of setting clear aims to overcome the challenges in the different areas of culture shock triangle. Moving to a new country, leaving the old behind is not stressful only to the person expatriated, but also to the people close to him or her. As starting the international assignment it is important to learn to cope with the stress the transition brings along. There should be an effort towards emotional balance between the euphoria and depression. Achieving contentment within solid family life and the challenges of the new environment will give better chances to perform well at work.

*"The last third of the six week program was held in Hamburg in Germany, as all of the three nationalities had different starting point for this last endeavor. The Germans were happy to finally get back home after four weeks of traveling. For Austrians the last part was just another two week trip, as the Finns started their 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> weeks on the road. We, the Finns, seemed to be tired for traveling, late evenings, all the new around us, workload and the culture of studying. In our minds it all got a common denominator by our prejudicial perception of German efficiency; we could not understand the will of analyzing everything and*

*willingness to work long hours. For us it felt to be pointless, so it all resulted to the group work being done by individuals. Our sub-group of an Austrian two Finns and two Germans divided into three parts, each one delivering an own written part for the last one to put it together.” (Jouhi)*

Thinking is something what, according to Hofstede (1997, 4-5) is programmed into our minds as we grow up. Each culture has its own patterns of thinking and acting which have emerged during the development of particular culture. Developing one's personal thinking is one aim Marx (1999, 15-16) sets in order to manage the culture shock. One should always prepare for an international assignment by studying the local culture, habits and conditions. By preparing well an image for the future to come can be made. Laroche and Rutherford (2007, 10-11) talks about the pros and cons of stereotyping and generalizing cultures. They warn not to make the assumption of the generalizations to apply on every individual representing a culture. They do mention that properly researched stereotypes and generalizations might help us to prepare for the encounter of a different culture. Marx (1999, 15-16) emphasizes challenging ones identity and social behaviour by developing the perception and interpretation; learning to think in a new way requires adding together bits and pieces from the observations around.

When settling to a new surrounding all the basic traditions like shopping for food or going for a dinner might change. The personal traditions and habits are influenced by new customs. Since the early childhood we are taught to act and think in one way. Later, through the search for our own ways and selves, with mature thinking, we create a personal image of ourselves that we are satisfied with, the personality. During a foreign mission our personality might be challenged. As the local habits pushes through we might start questioning our own habits and values. The lack of self-confidence and insecure feeling might erupt in a way of behaviour we do not recognize to be familiar to our self. The third factor on managing the culture shock is to adjust the social skills and identity. To success the goal a self knowledge is needed. One has to be able adjust and expand the social skills to suit the locals. The adjustment can be done by finding alternative ways to work or with deeper way to altering the whole thinking process. The most important is to pass the ethnocentrism and begin feeling, thinking and acting at a transnational level. (Marx 1999, 16-19.)

### 3.5 The three-step method to deal with cultural differences

Marx's (1999) field of expertise is international management, so her main focus is on individuals and how a person can overcome the possible issues of facing a new culture. An individual person might suffer from culture shock, but when talking about two or more cultures facing a 'shock', the term culture clash is used. When an expatriate is feeling his personal habits being threatened, in fact the cultures are clashing. It is when the habits, customs and

values are questioned by a representative with different origin. The clash of cultures usually happens due to a lack of communication and knowledge.

*"The first disagreement emerged when putting the final reports together; different reporting style of each educational institute represented. Fortunately in the group of two Finns and two Germans the confrontation was not big and was solved by the other part stepping a little bit back and adjusting to the stronger opinion. The Finnish style of reporting relied on more tight structure and the intention was to keep in the subject and express everything as clearly and straight as possible. For a Finn, the German style felt unnecessary, as it was to show the effectiveness in comparison to the number of pages" (Jouhi)*

Cultural differences can be defined by comparing people's attitude towards time and space of or by analyzing the structure of different groups of people. Raising the cultural awareness is necessary in understanding cultural differences and the way culture affects on one's way of thinking, acting and feelings. Any cultural differences would not occur without people from different backgrounds interacting with each other. Scollon & Scollon (1995, 125) remind us, that cultures are not communicating with each other but the individuals are.

According to Pinto (2000, 14) a systematic approach is needed if cultural differences are to be handled in an effective way. The three-step method he has created is to be used in situations where intercultural communication needs improvement. The method bases on three stages of cultural consciousness (see figure 13). The first stage is to recognize personal values, norms and behavioral codes. The second stage is to realize the others' values, norms and behavioral codes. The third stage is to familiarize people to each other's culture.

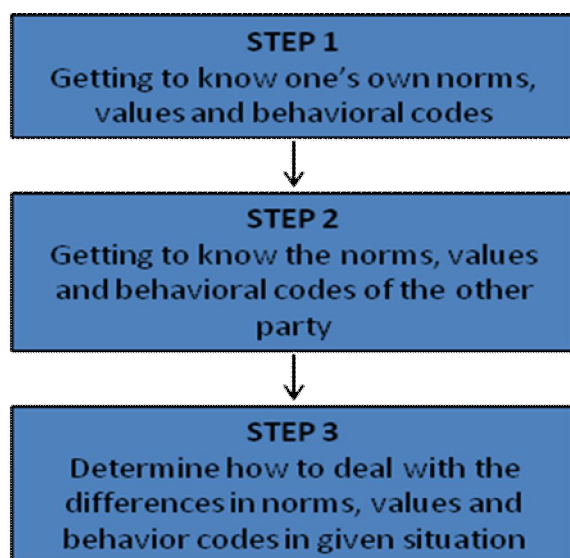


Figure 12: The three-step method to handle cultural differences (Pinto 2000, 173)

Sometimes only searching for accurate information can be a solution to misunderstandings raised from people interacting with other people from the same culture or from totally dif-



ferent culture. Correct information can prevent conflicts between people, but sometimes double-perspective approach is needed. Through double-perspective a person is able to see the situation from two different points of view; from the viewpoint of one's own culture and from the viewpoint of the other person's culture. This double-perspective approach to conflicts is successful if a person understands the behavior of the other person from another culture; and by knowing, might not be irritated by that behavior anymore. (Pinto 2000, 169-170.)

Even double perspective approach is not always enough with severe cultural clashes. Pinto (2000, 172) lists three obstacles which can prevent effective communication. First of all, we are not fully aware of all the values, norms and rules we have learned from our cultural background, that is why we tend to see, receive and interpret events around us from the limited perspective and regard our own norms and values universal. We also tend to attribute our own values and perceptions to other people. As we are not able to recognize our own values nor the other peoples' values or communication codes, we fail to make clear wishes and set limitations to prevent conflicts.

To figure out a solution to the obstacles mentioned above, Pinto (2000, 173) presents a method of three steps (Figure 12). The aim of the first two steps is to reach double perspective. By taking the first step, a person gets to know which rules and codes are influencing his or her way of thinking, acting, and communicating. In this step a person becomes aware of his own norms, values and behavioral codes. The second step aims to the knowledge of the values, norms and rules of the other party. This helps a person to separate his or her own opinions about the behavior of the other party from the actual facts. (Pinto 2000, 173.)

*"The problem of the introspective behavior was that the information and the bad feeling did not go forward. Our ethnic group kept everything inside and did not talk about it in public. Because the issues were not taken out into the open discussion the problems just stayed inside growing bigger all the time. A reason for keeping everything inside was the thought of the negative issues being personal and falling on individual; the group did not want to hurt anyone's feelings by saying something about for example their working methods. The negative issues were discussed among the ethnic group in our own language and in that way the things were tried to be solved". (Jouhi)*

By being aware of our own and the other party's cultural background and behavioral codes, moving to step three is possible. In this step a person should determine how to deal with the observed differences of norms, values and behavioral codes. Understanding the behavior of the others does not mean unquestionable adaptation or acceptance of the behavior. When interacting with people from different cultures, the goal is to find balance between those two cultures. In a given situation, both of the parties should make clear, which are the limits of accepting the behavior of the other party. (Pinto 2000, 173-182.)

## 4 The Cross-cultural Introduction

As said before, the educational event planned for introducing culture and cultural differences in International Facility Management Program 2008 was given a name *The Cross-cultural Introduction*. The purpose of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* was to raise cultural awareness and give tools for the students of the IFMP to handle possible problems they might face while spending time and working in a multicultural group. The aim was to activate the students to think about their own background, their own culture and give them information about the cultural background of the other students of the program. By knowing one's own background and understanding why other people behave as they do, handling possible problems is easier.

In the following chapters the process of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* is presented; starting from the planning phase, moving to the actual implementation of the event and ending to the evaluation.

### 4.1 Planning phase

The planning process begins always by setting the goals and the need (Lepistö 2004, 11; Pruuki 2008, 32). After considering the multiculturalism in the IFMP and the fact that cultural issues have not been referred in the curriculum of the program, a need for *the Cross-cultural Introduction* was found reasonable. The basic purpose for the planned event was to increase the understanding of working in the multicultural environment which for sure would differ from what they had used to while working or studying at home. The intended effect was to ease the grouping in early stage of the IFMP and give some tools for the conflict resolution by waking up the cultural consciousness of individuals personal and national habits.

After analyzing the need and setting the goals for the introduction, the theoretical framework was created. The introduction was planned to be carried out in one and a half day. The first day of the introduction was set to the beginning of the program; on its first day on 11<sup>th</sup> of August 2008. The second part was planned to take place on Friday afternoon on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August. Considering the limited time to use for the teaching during the introduction, getting in depth with the cultural understanding was impossible.

Pruuki (2008, 41-42) reminds that the goals should support the chosen substance, it is essential to define what will be taught in the given time and what should be left out of the lesson. The goal and the topic of the planned introduction clarified that including theory of culture and cultural differences to the curriculum was essential. A natural way of passing theoretical information to the students was to plan a short lecture. The presented theories were selected and simplified to fit the tight schedule of the event.

David Pinto's three step method formed the structure of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* (Table 2). The method aims to improve intercultural communication, whether it is an educational event, multicultural workplace or culturally related encounter (Chapter 3.5). The planned lecture of culture and cultural differences supported the chosen method and bound it to a bigger framework.

Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> of August		
10:00 – 11:30	IFMP – Course introduction (Pauliina Nurkka & Tiina Ranta) Information about the day, goals Getting to know each other What kind of animal are you? Activating passwords to Laurea network	STEP 1 Getting to know one's own norms, values and behavioural codes
11:30 – 13:00	TASK 1 Planning presentations in national groups Lunch	
13:00 – 14:00	Presentations	STEP 2 Getting to know norms, values and behavioural codes of the other party
14:00 – 15:00	Lecture of the theory of culture and cultural differences	
15:00 -	TASK 2 A walk in Helsinki	STEP 3 Determine how to deal with the differences in norms, values and behavioural codes in given situation
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> of August		
Afternoon	Presentations based on the essays Discussion	

Table 2: The timetable of the Cross-cultural Introduction in the IFMP 2008

The method was chosen for its clear concept of handling cultural differences, as it starts from the narrow perspective of the student's own culture, moving towards to wider perspective and cultural awareness. For each step several activities supporting the set learning objectives were planned. To hold the students' attention through the planned schedule and to make *the Cross-cultural Introduction* pleasurable, several teaching methods and activities such as lecturing, group work and presentations were used. Cotton (1995, 26) and Kupias (2004, 45) find lecturing, where students are passive listeners, inefficient way of passing on information. For example in one hour lecture, the highest attention point is reached after 20 minutes and will decrease the rest of the time without a change of activity. It is recommended to change the teaching method ones in a while during the lesson. (Pruuki 2008, 55-56.)

## 4.2 Implementation

As said in the previous chapter, the structure of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* was planned to follow the three-step method, and the activities carried out supported the set learning objectives of each step. In this chapter the implementation of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* is reviewed following the timetable presented in the table 2.

*The Cross-cultural Introduction* started with a short presentation of the Laurea's coordinator for the IFMP. After that, the goals of the introduction as well as the used method were introduced to the students. As the students had not met each other earlier, a natural continuum was to introduce one to another. The participants were asked to tell who they were and where they came from, as well as about their reasons to participate in the IFMP and what were their expectations for the program. In 2008 there were all together 18 students participating in the IFMP; five from both Finland and the Netherlands and four from both Germany and Austria.

To activate the students to think about their behavior and individual differences in characters, an animal test (see appendix 1) was made. The aim of the animal test was to introduce the basic individual behavior styles to the students. During the test, the students had to evaluate their behavioral characteristics and rank given options on a one to four scale. The goal of the test was to find one's strongest and most dominant behavior style out of the four presented styles of the test. The main idea to complete the test was to familiarize students to their own behavioral styles and give them clues how all possible difficulties are not depending on cultural differences.

To finish the first step of Pinto's three-step method (chapter 3.5) in order to understand the possible cultural or behavioral differences occurring during the IFMP, the students had to work together in national teams and prepare visual presentation of their own country and culture by a poster. The goal of the task (see appendix 2) was to activate the students to think about their own background and cultural characters and present the most interesting and describing issues to the others. The students were guided to include relevant facts of the country and its business life to the presentation, to describe typical features of the culture and reflect the attitude towards time, authorities and conflicts.

The students were provided with materials to prepare the posters. After preparing the posters the students presented their work (see appendix 3) to the other groups. By following through all the presentations, the students received information and learned about the other nationalities and cultures taking part to the IFMP. By this way the second step of Pinto's method was taken.

After the students had learned about their own cultural background and heard the features of the other cultures, a short lecture of culture and cultural differences was held. The lecture included the basic concepts of culture and cultural differences by introducing the onion model of the layers of the culture and the Hofstede's dimensions of national cultures. This theoretical framework is presented in the chapter 3. The aim of the lecture was to deepen the cultural understanding. The purpose was also to bind the three step method and the tasks already taken into a bigger framework. The student also tested how well their own national culture fitted to their attitudes and to their personal way of thinking by filling up Hofstedes culture survey (see appendix 4).

The last task (see appendix 5) was to reach the third step of Pinto's three-step method. The students were divided into multicultural groups to discuss the cultural differences and similarities recognized from the tasks completed earlier and from their previous experience. The students had time to discuss and identify possible risks and cultural clashes which might occur during the IFMP during a walk around the Helsinki city. The intent of dividing students to multicultural groups was to speed up the grouping among the students. To complete the task two, the students had to write essays based on the discussions had around the culture and cultural differences. After writing the essay, the students had to prepare themselves to present their thoughts to the others.

The second part of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* was implemented on Friday afternoon on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August. The students presented their point of view from the given assignment. After the presentations a re-cap of the issues handled during the first part of the introduction was held. To bind the issues the students had noticed during the given tasks in to bigger framework, it was essential to summarize the main points of cultural theory presented. The whole session was focusing more on discussion, as the main purpose of the day was to find out if there were any thoughts raised around the cultural issues handled.

## 5 Conceptualization of the Cross-cultural Introduction

The second main objective (Chapter 2.2) of the research was to create and implement a concept for a short-term educational event. The first structure of the concept was created on the theoretical bases reviewed earlier in the research. The created concept was tested by implementing an educational event named *the Cross-cultural Introduction* in the International Facility Management Program 2008. The concept was developed further according to the experiences from the implementation.

In the following chapters we will assess the concept developed. The structure of it is explained, and at the same time an insight to the reasoning of the chosen form is given. As the concept was planned to be alterable, possibilities on the alteration are suggested. When reviewing the concept, the occasion where the concept is used is referred as an educational event. Other terms used concerning the concept are the 'lecturer', which refers to the person who conducts the education, and the 'participant' which refers to a person taking part in the education.

### 5.1 The model of the concept

The concept (Figure 13) is represented as a process with a beginning and an end. The structure of the concept follows Pinto's three step method (Chapter 3.5) by progressing chronically. The model is divided into three sections following Pinto's steps. The sections are each one of their own entities having own learning objectives. Dividing the process into smaller pieces will give a certain rhythm and structure for the educational event.

The arching lines of the model represent the funnel-like structure of the education. The intention is that the education will start from a narrow perspective and simple concepts of culture. During the education the teaching will build up towards wider concepts to deepen the understanding of cultural relations and cross-cultural awareness. The physical process will end as the time reserved for the contact teaching ends. On the other hand the funnel in the model remains open as the timeline continues, because of the hoped effect of the participants continuing learning and applying the given information. The intention of the concept is to wake the cultural consciousness and begin the learning process of the cultural issues.

The progress arching to both upward and downwards reflects the two-way learning. In two-way learning it is important that all the participants recognize that at the same time as they are contributing they are also offered with a possibility to learn from the others; to give and to take (Gientzotis, 2006). The idea is that, as the participants realize their own and the others' position in the program, common methods and rules for working in a multicultural group can be set together. The intention with the concept is to support the two-way learning by encouraging discussion and promoting participants' contribution to the topics dealt.

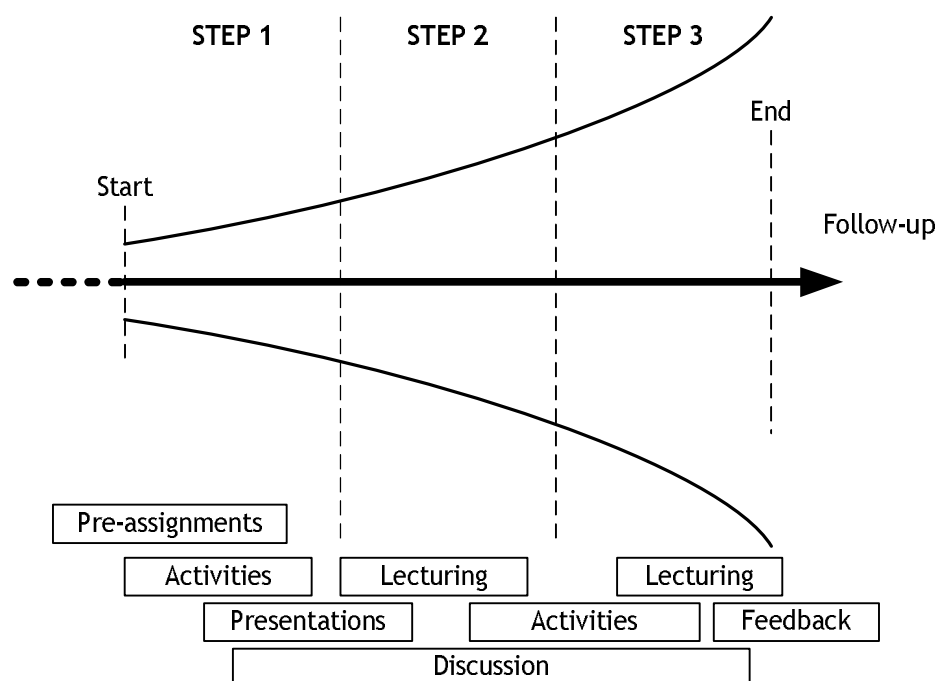


Figure 13: The model of the concept of the Cross-cultural Introduction

In Figure 13 the Y-axis reflects the progress. At the beginning, the subjects taught concern more the individualistic aspects. Supposing the subject to be closer to the participants' self the learning is expected to be less progressive. The more the topic is discussed the more progressive the learning should be. The progress is designed to almost double at each step.

In the model (Figure 13) the arrow on the X-axis reflects the time. The dash line before the start illustrates both the time and the already existing knowledge of the subject taught. This illustrates the process being a part of life-time learning, taking the advantage of the prior knowledge of the participants. As mentioned before, the concept is planned so that the participants would use the gained knowledge later on. That is why the timeline is not limited to the end of the process, on a contrary the follow-up is set to reach the time after. The latter reminding is planned to refresh the memory and to bring up the taught topics.

The blocks (Figure 13) reflect the different methods that can be used when implementing the concept. The places of the blocks in the model are only suggestions on how a concept can be build. The concept is flexible and the structure can be alternated every time it is used. It can be even changed during the process if the situation calls for a change. The size of a block indicates the time reserved for it. The places of the blocks tell the time and the moment in which it is planned to be carried out.

## 5.2 Applying the model

When applying the model in planning the context of an educational event, it is important to notice that the basic assumption is that the participants are not previously familiar with the subject. The concept is designed to set everyone on the same starting point. That way the participants are set into an equal position and everyone is provided with the same education. The planning lecturer is responsible of how the event will start and how equally the participants are treated concerning the subject taught.

The clear structure eases the planning, because each of the three parts can be planned separately. For each section a new set of goals can be set, yet the basic learning objectives should follow Pinto's (Chapter 3.5) three step methods goals. At the beginning, in the step one the learning is about personal habits, one's self and about the culture each participant represents them self. The objective for the step two is to learn about the others' culture. At the third section the goal is to combine the previously learned; the dealt cultural issues and aspects should be reviewed and used to design tools to be used in resolving possible culture related conflicts.

The time for different steps is not specifically defined in the model; it is impossible to define how long it takes to either go through or to understand the different sections. The time used for each step depends about the lecturer and how the sectioning is planned. In the end it is the lecturer's responsibility to follow the time and the group's progress.

Reacting to the time but even more to the progress is probably the most challenging task of the conducting lecturer. During the execution of the event the importance of the smooth transitions from a dealt topic to another increases. When the time for the education is limited and as much as possible should be covered it is important to be able to carry the discussion towards the intended direction. That does not mean leading to some set conclusion, but to guiding and conducting the event according to the plan.

Depending on the subject taught, the event should always start with an introduction to the subject and to the learning objects of the process. Depending on the group's level of previous knowledge, the structure of the education will be decided by the conducting lecturer. Yet, it is essential to at least to recap the basic terminology and context that will be used. During the implementation, it is not necessary to separate the sections. They can be conducted as a one entity. Whether the event is handled as one piece or in sections the reasons and objectives should be explained at some point of the event. Explaining the intention behind the steps may increase the interest and that way support the learning situation.



The model helps the reacting to the changing conditions. If the planning of the event is done using the blocks, some quick changes to the curriculum can be made easily. By planning extra blocks before the event, a backup is created. Then the alternation of the program can be done quickly, just by implementing a secondary block. If there is a good set of different blocks reserved, reacting to the discussion or to the group dynamics can be done easier.

As mentioned previously, the blocks reflect different methods. The model (Figure 13) reflects only one possible plan of a structure. The intention is that every lecturer builds an own plan which to apply. It might be that after receiving the pre-assignment the lecturer feels the schedule must be changed in order to start with a 'lecture' or 'presentation.' Some suggestions on the contents of the different blocks are as following:

- Pre-assignment:
  - Preparing to the taught subject individually by the given instructions e.g. personal introduction, a relation to the subject, essay etc.
  - Reading assignment e.g. a book or a scientific article
  - Preparing a given assignment in a group
  - Preparing a profile, an analysis or a introduction in a group or individually by given instructions
- Lecturing and/or discussion:
  - Basic introduction to the subject and the reasons beyond the event
  - Explaining the chosen content and why it is chosen
  - Key terminology of the subject
  - Expert lecture from an external professional
  - Interactive lecture with the participants e.g. discussion about opinions, comparing experiences, creating or innovating new
  - Prepared lecture by a participant
- Presentations:
  - The use of various innovative methods of presentations e.g. a slideshow, a poster, a theatrical act, a monolog, a video etc.
  - Prepared beforehand or as an activity to be presented during the event
  - Prepared individually or in a group. If in group is it with a common group or with previously unknown people

- Activities:
  - Filling questionnaires and having a lecture or a discussion according to it
  - Playing games with an intention; to increase the grouping, to deepen the knowledge, to introduce the topic
  - Tests to clarify perceptions or to find out differences, personal abilities or mind sets etc.
- Feedback:
  - Getting feedback
  - Finding out the impact, the meaning or the reactions to the given education
  - Prepared feedback forms
  - Feedback sessions
  - Giving feedback during the activities or discussions, about the performed assignments, sending afterword

## 6 Evaluation of the thesis

As the thesis was functional, the main emphasis of the thesis was on the educational event organized to the students of the International Facility Management Program in the year 2008. As the written report is finalized a rough two years has passed. That is the biggest factor to decrease the reliability of the research. During the long process, the structure of the research paper has taken many forms leading finally to the final version. The process between the functional implementation and the written theoretical framework has molded the final form of the suggested structure of the concept. The long processing time on a contrary does not reduce the validity or the usability of the concept created.

### 6.1 The implementation of the Cross-cultural Introduction

The implementation of the educational event *the Cross-cultural Introduction* took place in August 2008. The event was divided into two sessions; first part lasted for a day and the second part played a role of a feedback session lasting for a half a day. The intention of the event was to implement the three steps (Chapter 3.5) of Pinto's method, so the used structure of the event supported the intention well. If considered the product of the research, the concept (Figure 13), the first part of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* covered the first two steps of the chosen method. The second part was to reach the third step. The implementation confirmed the method to be usable even if the time is limited.

When considered the limited time, the biggest issue to be considered in the future use of the concept is the amount of given education and the reasoned use of chosen theories. The language skills of the participants varied a lot and affected on the discussion. The lecturers were unable to react on the situation were a lighter approach to the theoretical issues would have been better considering the learning. The chosen theories lectured were justified, but the used vocabulary and the depth of the chosen material was challenging; not only to the participants, but to the lecturers also. The inability to react effectively enough to the fact that all the participants were not able to understand the discussed topic set difficulties to the use of time. The need to explain some terms and cultural anthropological concepts required time and the planned timing was hard to keep.

Due to the reflection of the implementation a big emphasis on the concept developed is on the alterability. It is important to prepare for the event with backup; with a variety of activities, different kinds of lecture materials and perhaps a printed vocabulary on the main terms and concepts. For the authors the challenge during the implementation was the lacking experience of keeping lectures. That made the reaction to changes almost impossible, because

the planned structure and context was set so strongly in mind. The plan of the education did not allow changes, because there was nothing planned for backup or to alternate the topics dealt.

## 6.2 The contents of the Cross-cultural Introduction

The content of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* was chosen to support the three-step method (Chapter 3.5). The intention was to use a mix of learning methods to keep up the interest and to involve the participants during what appeared to be a quite long day. The mix of different methods consisted lecturing, discussion, questionnaires, group work, presentation. The main idea was to have a laid back and relaxed open situation where discussion was supported. Even though some of the chosen tasks were harder to understand, the mix of different methods appeared to function well. The participants seemed to stay focused and engaged from the start till the end of the day one.

The learning objectives for the first day were to reach the steps 1 'getting to know one's own norms, values and behavioural codes' and 2 'getting to know the norms, values and behavioural codes of the other party'. The tasks and activities chosen for reaching the goals served the purpose well. The participants were enthusiastic and worked as well as they were expected. A problem was that all the participants did not necessarily understand the intention and the goals of *the Cross-cultural Introduction*. In that sense the beginning of the program could have been structured better. If the goals and the basic concept would have been explained better, the learning could have been deeper. The basic structure of a culture as a concept was not explained until in the afternoon of the first day. By explaining the cause and effect relations early enough a greater understanding of the subject could have been gained.

During and after the implementation it came clear that time reserved or the structure of planned education was too tight. As the program was tight and fixed, there was not enough time for neither explanations or for questions. Of course the discussion during the lectures and activities allowed questions and answers, but the deeper understanding was not possible to be reached. The concept of culture and all the different theories is wide. To be able to explain the necessary aspects an expertise is needed. This time the lecturers did not meet the requirements as well as possible. The reached understanding of the subject seemed to stay superficial.

The learning objective in for the third step (Chapter 3.5) is to 'Determine how to deal with the differences in norms, values and behavioural codes in given situation'. In the Cross-cultural Introduction this step was tried to be reached with an assignment that was done in a multicultural group. The last task in *the Cross-cultural Introduction* was to work in multicul-

tural groups and create a short essay on how to prepare for possible conflict situations between cultures.

The returned papers differed from each other a lot, yet one common nominator could be found; the groups had been discussing about differences between the individuals from various countries, but they were not able to bind the discussed things into the theoretical context. The structure of short essays differed from a group work into a list of what individuals had listed from their own perspective. In the papers the participants mentioned that all of them felt the communication with a foreign language to be the biggest obstacle during the IFMP. That can be transferred straight to be the biggest problem of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* as well. When working with a foreign language the lecturer not only needs to know about the subject but also has to be able to use the language so that everybody understands the given education.

The nature of the second day of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* was to be a feedback session to analyse the essays and discuss about them with the participants. The intention was by discussion to find out if the participants had already had difficulties in the group work and that way to lead to the determination on how to deal with the cultural differences. Even though an open discussion was encouraged a polite atmosphere dominated and no-one's feelings were tried to be harmed. Even though the discussion was held a bit back, the group dynamic felt completely different than in the beginning of the week. During a week the grouping had evolved and the biggest barrier of the communicating with a foreign language seemed to be disappeared. Any visible conflict could not be seen and the participants seemed to enjoy each other. That was a pleasure to see, as one of the goals of the research was to help the grouping and ease the working in a multicultural group.

### 6.3 Future use of the concept

The concept of *the Cross-cultural Introduction* was developed to the IFMP2008. The model that is described in the chapter 5 was developed after the first implementation basing on the experiences and self-reflection. Any further testing on the model has not yet been done. According to the experiences and reflection of the research the suggested model of a concept is considered functional and justified. The concept is described clearly and the implementation should be easy by following the directions. If the concept is used the main emphasis should be on the planning and preparing enough alternatives.

The participants of the IFMP2008 were not asked any feedback on *the Cross-cultural Introduction*. That decreases the validity of the research. If implemented in the future, the feedback should be collected in order to find out the effect of the education. The felt effect would tell

if the introduction is needed or considered to be beneficial. By collecting feedback the research would have gotten more credibility, now the research relies mainly on the theoretical justification and to the reflection of the authors.

Bing (2009) criticizes the misuse of different questionnaires on international training, as being used to offer quick solutions or to explain the whole concept of culture. He also warns about generalization of cultural databases and applying individual scores to country's ones. In this research the use of questionnaires was justified and the participants were emphasized of the meaning of the chosen activities. The questionnaires were used to raise the awareness of individual and cultural differences and to support the discussion. When implementing the developed concept, it is justified to use questionnaires in supporting the structure. As the nature of being open and discursive the use of variable method is suggested. The cultural issues and cross-cultural differences are hard to learn by reading; experiencing and providing with an explanation will more likely trigger the individual thinking process leading to the realising the people are different.

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## Exercise 2 - What Kind of Animal Are You?

Recent research concerning the specific ways that people naturally sense, conceptualize and respond to situations had led to the discovery of four basic behavior styles.

### *Instructions for Responding*

In the space provided below, identify those behaviors which are MOST-TO-LEAST characteristic of you in an identified situation. Working left to right, assign "4" points to the most characteristic below, "3" to the next most characteristic, then "2" and finally "1" to your LEAST characteristic behavior.

### *Example*

4 Directing    2 Influencing    3 Steady                      1 Cautious

D		I		S		C	
	Directing		Influencing		Steady		Cautious
	Self-Certain		Optimistic		Deliberate		Restrained
	Adventurous		Enthusiastic		Predictable		Logical
	Decisive		Open		Patient		Analytical
	Daring		Impulsive		Stabilizing		Precise
	Restless		Emotional		Protective		Doubting
	Competitive		Persuading		Accommodating		Curious
	Assertive		Talkative		Modest		Tactful
	Experimenting		Charming		Easy-Going		Consistent
	Forceful		Sensitive		Sincere		Perfectionist
	TOTAL		TOTAL		TOTAL		TOTAL

**Instructions for Counting and Graphing**

1. Total the numbers in each of the four columns. Place the total number for each column in the blank at the bottom of the chart.
2. Check the accuracy by adding all the columns together. When all four columns are added together they will equal 100.
3. Plot the numbers from the totals columns above, on the graph below. For example: if the total number in the first column was 19, you would place the dot half-way between the 18 and the 20 in that column on the graph for that dimension.

After completing your graph, circle the highest visual point. This represents your strongest behavioral characteristic. The higher you score on the graph, the more intensity you bring to this behavior characteristic. Look at the letter revealed at the top of the graph which corresponds to the highest visual point. Using this letter, look up your behavioral style (D = dominance style, I = influencing style, S = steadiness style, and C = cautious style) on the attached pages.

<b>Level of Energy</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>C</b>
	40	40	40	40
	38	38	38	38
	36	36	36	36
	34	34	34	34
	32	32	32	32
	30	30	30	30
	28	28	28	28
	26	26	26	26
	24	24	24	24
	22	22	22	22
	20	20	20	20
	18	18	18	18
	16	16	16	16
	14	14	14	14
	12	12	12	12
	10	10	10	10

## Understanding Lions or High “Ds”



Basic Motivation:	-results, challenge
Desires situations which allow:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-freedom</li><li>-authority</li><li>-varied activities</li><li>-difficult assignments</li><li>-opportunity for advancement</li></ul>
Responds best to others who:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-provide direct answers</li><li>-stick to business</li><li>-stress logic</li><li>-provide pressure</li><li>-allow freedom for personal accomplishment</li></ul>
Needs to learn that:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-you need people</li><li>-relaxation time is not a crime</li><li>-some controls/restrictions are needed</li><li>-everyone has a boss, even you</li><li>-verbalizing why you reached a conclusion is important</li></ul>

## Understanding Otters or High “Is”



Basic Motivation:	-recognition, approval
Desires situations which allow:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-prestige</li><li>-friendly relationships</li><li>-freedom from control and detail</li><li>-opportunity to help others</li><li>-opportunity to motivate people</li><li>-platform to verbalize ideas</li></ul>
Responds best to others who:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-are democratic and friendly</li><li>-provide social involvement (fun) along with or after working on projects</li><li>-provide recognition of abilities</li><li>-appreciate their bent towards risk-taking</li></ul>
Needs to learn that:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-time control helps</li><li>-deadlines are important</li><li>-there is such a thing as too much optimism</li></ul>

## Understanding Golden Retrievers or High “Ss”



Basic Motivation:	-relationships, appreciation
Desires situations which allow:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-specialization</li><li>-being part of a team</li><li>-having established daily (or work) patterns</li><li>-being secure in life situations</li><li>-consistent familiar environment</li><li>-having clearly defined goals and the steps to reach them</li></ul>
Responds best to others who:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-are relaxed and amiable</li><li>-gives them time to adjust to changes in schedule (projects)</li><li>-serves as a friend</li><li>-allows them to work at their own pace</li><li>-ask “how” questions</li><li>-provide personal support</li></ul>
Needs to learn that:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-change can provide opportunity</li><li>-you can't be “best friends” with everybody</li><li>-listening to others is great, but sharing their own needs and feelings is important</li></ul>

## Understanding Beavers or High “Cs”



Basic Motivation:	-to do things right, quality control
Desires situations which allow:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-clearly defined tasks</li><li>-security in relationships and situation</li><li>-team participation</li><li>-stability</li><li>-limited risk</li><li>-assignments that require precision, “reading directions,” and careful planning</li></ul>
Responds best to others who:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-provide reassurance consistently</li><li>-maintain a supportive atmosphere</li><li>-provide an open-door policy for questions</li><li>-spell out detailed operating standards</li></ul>
Needs to learn that:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-total support is not always possible</li><li>-thorough explanation isn't everything</li><li>-deadlines must be met</li><li>-predictability does not equal being “boring”</li></ul>



## Behavioral Tendencies

I. The **Lion's** tendencies are to be (high "D")

- Compelled by ego; forceful and competitive.
- Task oriented; move people to action; desire and cause change.
- Motivated by directness; do not like to be entertained or restrained
- Basic Fear: Being taken advantage of; criticism of their character (self concept/ego)
- Limitations: impatience; selective listeners; have "blind spots" concerning awareness of others' views and feelings.

II. The **Otter's** tendencies are to be (high "I")

- Optimistic and people oriented.
- Socially oriented, emotionally energetic, loves to entertain.
- Motivated by social recognition; need companionship and group support.
- Basic Fear: rejection, disapproval in relationships, task criticism (they often interpret this as personal rejection).
- Limitations: unorganized in accomplishing tasks unless they are also a high "D".

III. The **Golden Retriever's** tendencies are to be (high "S")

- Pragmatic, a team player or family person
- Likes concrete results, the "bottom line" approach.
- Motivated by loyalty.
- Respectful of procedures.
- Basic Fear: Loss of stability, fear of the unknown, unplanned change.
- Limitations: possessiveness and adherence to code of order and desire for tranquility limits their ability to act decisively or face difficult situations.

IV. The **Beaver's** tendencies are to be (high "C")

- Accurate and precise; concerned for quality control.
- Highly intuitive; people readers.
- Motivated by the correct or proper way to do something.
- Disciplined.
- Basic Fear: Criticism of their work or effort.
- Limitations: Overly critical and demanding of both themselves and others because of high standards; they rarely vocalize their criticisms.

## Situational Examples

**Key: D = Lion, I = Otter, S = Golden Retriever, C = Beaver**

As children in a ceramics class where they have been asked to make a soldier statuette:

- The High "S" has his done on time. Nice job, worth displaying.
- The High "C" does an exceptional job. Buttons are etched in and he even has teeth.
- The High "I" isn't finished because he's too busy playing with the other kids.
- The High "D" finished long ago...now he's working simultaneously on a tank, shop and airplane.

As four people each isolated in a north woods cabin for the winter:

- The High "S" settles in to catch up on some reading or starts a woodworking project.
- The High "D" gets cabin fever in a week and decides to remodel the cabin.
- The High "C" begins reading a book that explains how to live in an isolated area, north woods cabin.
- The High "I" snowshoes into the woods everyday to talk to the animals.

Shopping for a new car:

- The High "S" takes his time and shops several dealers, looking for a model like the one he already has.
- The High "C" asks questions about performance, financing and equipment.
- The High "I" immediately selects the flashy new model everyone will envy.
- The High "D" never shows up. She gets someone else to buy it for her.

As legislators:

- The High "D" drafts 20 new bills, shatters precedent, and fractures social tranquility.
- The High "I" smoothes ruffled feathers, arbitrates compromises, and helps consolidate party unity.
- The High "S" researches data and compiles legislative reports.
- The High "C" investigates, enforces policy, and heads the ethics committee.

Meeting as a Board of Directors to initiate new company policy:

- The High "I" discusses the effect this might have on the people concerned.
- The High "S" gets nervous thinking about how this will change his department.
- The High "C" takes notes on the new operating policy.
- The High "D" moves the meeting to be adjourned. He has other projects that demand his time.

As combat generals:

- The High "D" attacks, attacks, attacks the enemy but forgets to order supplies, munitions, and replacement troops.
- The High "I" coordinates with commanders on all fronts and lobbies for a harmonious battle plan everyone will like.
- The High "S" attacks in an orderly, conventional manner just like he was taught at the Academy.
- The High "C" inventories all his supplies and vows not to attack until every piece of equipment he needs is delivered.

As the major in a pioneer town:

- The High "C" opens a county land office to insure all property claims are filed accurately.
- The High "S" becomes the loyal deputy sheriff.
- The High "I" pastors the local church, promotes family activities, owns the saloon and knows everyone by first name.
- The High "D" owns the bank, newspaper and runs for sheriff, judge and tax collector.

## TASK 1

### PRESENTATION OF YOUR OWN COUNTRY

Work in your national group.

Create a poster identifying your culture.

Prepare a presentation of 15-20 minutes based on the poster.

The aim of the presentation is to familiarize others to your country; its culture and customs.

You should include following issues to your presentation:

- Facts about your country which you find relevant
- Typical features of your culture
  - o Family values
  - o Daily routines
  - o Leisure time
  - o Etc.
- Business etiquette and meeting customs
  - o Dress code
  - o Gestures
  - o Small talk
  - o Etc.
- The attitude towards
  - o Time
  - o Authorities
  - o Hierarchy
  - o Conflicts
  - o Etc.

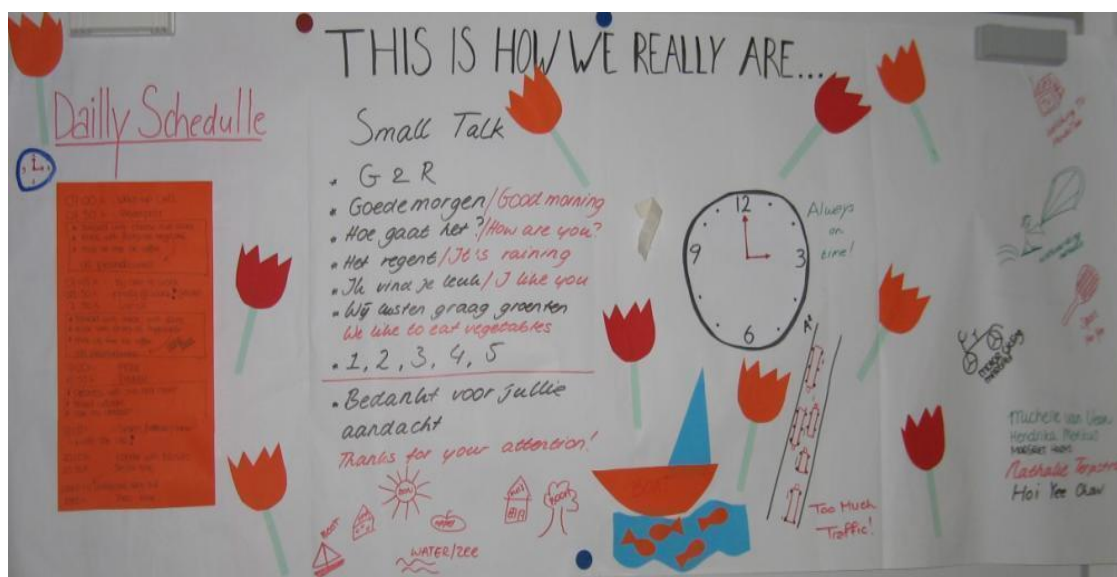
Useful links:

<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/country-profiles.html>

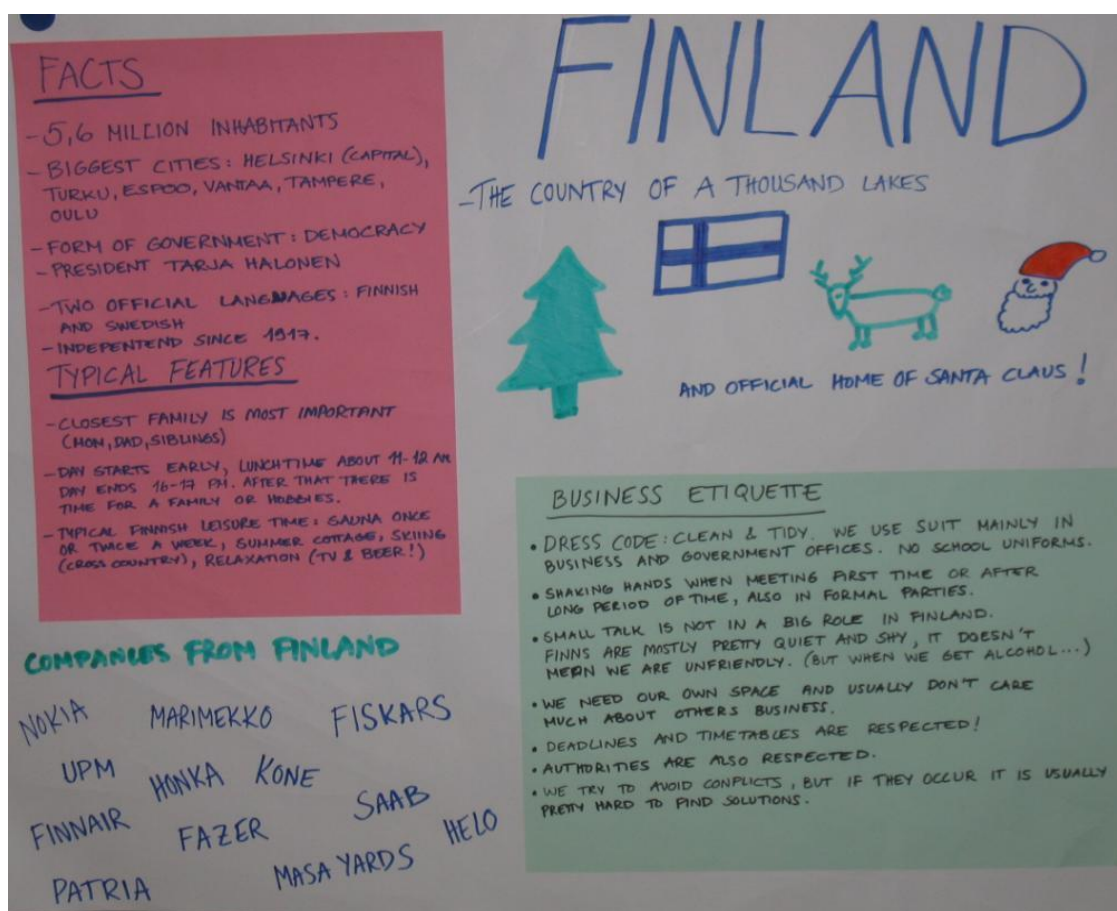
<http://www.japanco.co.uk/default.aspx?PID=362>

[http://www.executiveplanet.com/index.php?title=Main\\_Page](http://www.executiveplanet.com/index.php?title=Main_Page)

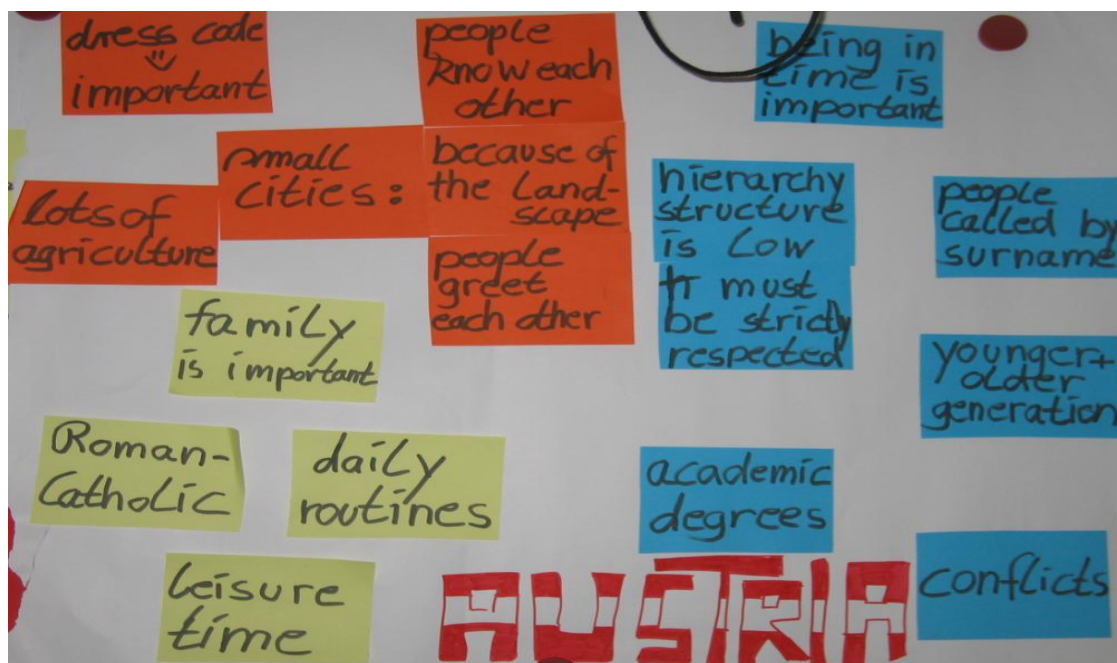
<http://www.worldbusinessculture.com/countries/business-with-other-countries.html>



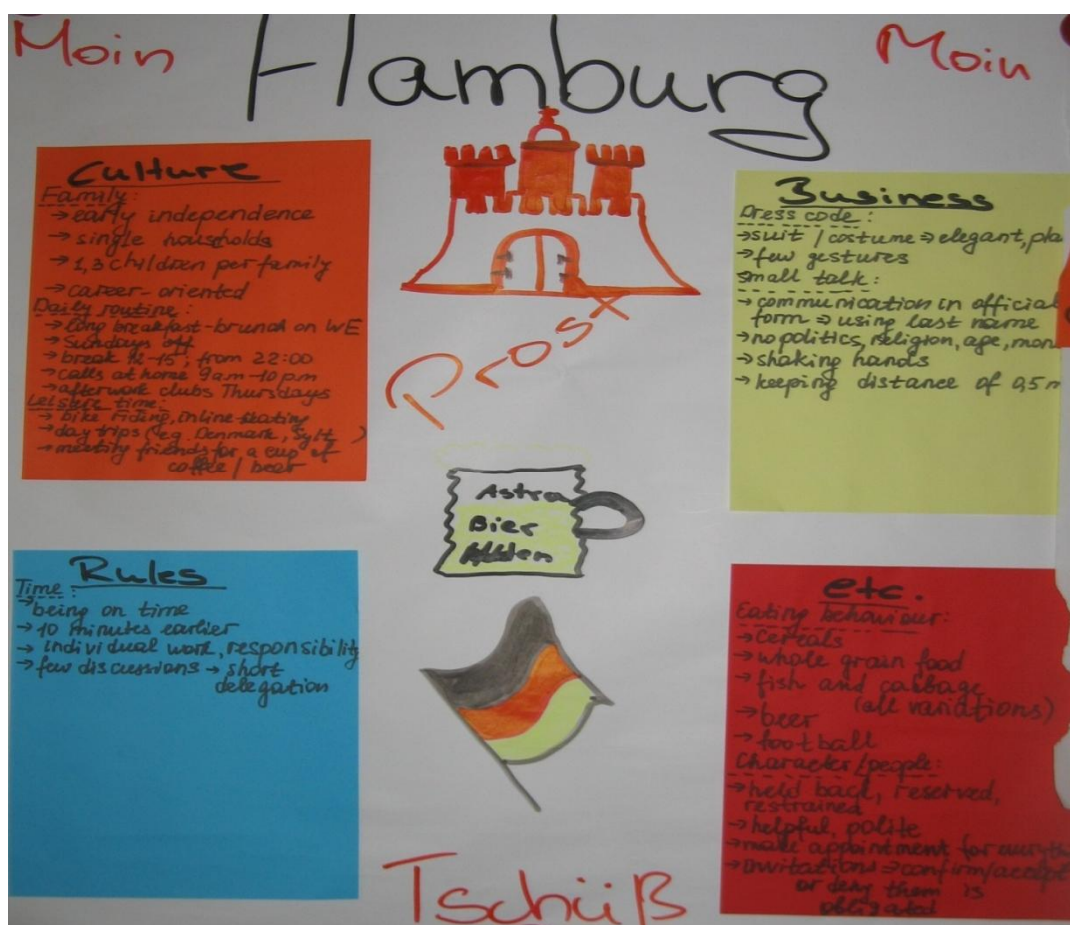
Poster of Dutch students



Poster of Finnish students



Poster of Austrian students



Poster of German students

## "A Culture Survey"

The activity is based on Mr Geert Hofstede's research on cultural differences and is taken from "Promoting a European Dimension of Intercultural Learning - Developing School Materials", EFIL Seminars, Vienna 17-20 April and Lisbon, 26-29 June, 1997.

### A Culture Survey

With every statement tick off the number which describes the country in which you would feel most comfortable.

#### PART 1 (PDI)

I feel most comfortable in a country where ...

children in a family are taught that their opinion counts as much as the parents'	1 2 3 4 5	children in a family are taught that the authority of the parents is not to be questioned
children in a family are encouraged to learn that nothing is to be taken for granted	1 2 3 4 5	children in a family are taught that statements from older or more important persons are to be accepted
inferiors should find their working task at a job and their position in a company themselves	1 2 3 4 5	the responsibilities of every staff member and employee are clearly defined
staff members continually challenge their superiors and where it is sometimes difficult to make out who is in charge and who should be told what to do	1 2 3 4 5	the superior at a place of work decides and closely leads and controls his/her staff members and the staff members accept this because they respect him/her and consider this to be his responsibility
the view dominates that the political system can be changed best step by step and through discussions and democratic votes	1 2 3 4 5	the view dominates that the political system can be changed best by exchanging the positions of power.

Add the marked numbers and write the sum into the box below. Then calculate the result for part 1 as indicated.

Result: ... x 5 = ... - 25 = ...

Do the same with parts 2 to 5.

#### PART 2 (MAS)

I feel most comfortable in a country where ...

people express their sympathy with the less successful and the successful are envied	1 2 3 4 5	people adore the successful and blame the less successful
motivation at a place of work results from a pleasant environment,	1 2 3 4 5	motivation at a place of work results from clearly defined goals and



warmth and friendliness		a great deal of responsibility as responsibility is a proof for success
people at a place of work endeavor to accomplish agreement and colleagues do not compete with each other	1 2 3 4 5	confrontations are valued as something positive and leading to achievement: either you face competition or you perish
both men and women can be modest and understanding, thinking about the quality of life	1 2 3 4 5	men pursue material success and women are rather modest and understanding, thinking about the quality of life
love means intimacy	1 2 3 4 5	love means emotional support

Result: ... x 5 = ... - 25 = ...

### PART 3 (IDV)

I feel most comfortable in a country where ...

people in their groups have strong and lasting relationships	1 2 3 4 5	people choose their friends because of similar interests or sympathy
communal spirit and social solidarity predominate	1 2 3 4 5	loneliness and freedom predominate
people concentrate mainly on not losing their face and in maintaining that of others	1 2 3 4 5	people concentrate on coming up to their own views and standards
promotion is granted because of loyalty and age	1 2 3 4 5	promotion is granted because of performance and not because of age
a superior who does not make use of his/her power in order to get a job for a member of the family in need is regarded as immoral	1 2 3 4 5	a superior who makes use of his/her power in order to get a job for a member of the family in need is regarded as immoral

Result: ... x 5 = ... - 25 = ...

### PART 4 (UAI)

I feel most comfortable in a country where ...

children are taught in families to live in chaos and uncertainty	1 2 3 4 5	children are taught in families to create clear structures and to avoid ambivalent situations
people with a general knowledge are admired because they know how to deal with most every situation	1 2 3 4 5	specialists and competent leaders are admired
you don't always have to have your identity card with you	1 2 3 4 5	you always have to carry your identity card with you
you are not supposed to show feelings in public	1 2 3 4 5	you are supposed to show feelings in public (at the right place and at the right time)

there are only a few rules to be  
obeyed in society

1 2 3 4 5

there are many rules to be obeyed  
in society

Result: ... x 5 = ... - 25 = ...

#### PART 5 (CDI)

I feel most comfortable in a country where ...

people can clearly distinguish be-  
tween good and bad

1 2 3 4 5

people submit to a common goal  
without thinking about good and  
evil

balance and constancy rank first

1 2 3 4 5

the fact is stressed that everything  
is relative and might change at any  
time

children are taught to ask "why"

1 2 3 4 5

children are taught to ask "what"  
and "how"

people often refer to their roots  
and their past

1 2 3 4 5

people can submit to goals which  
will be put into action in 100 years

people want to bring into accord all  
information

1 2 3 4 5

people are able to live with contra-  
dictory information

Result: ... x 5 = ... - 25 = ...

#### All 5 Scores

	(1) PDI	(2) MAS	(3) IDV	(4) UAI	(5) CDI	
your scores						
Your country's						



## The Dimensions of Culture

The above questionnaire is based on the research of Dr. GEERT HOFSTEDE on cultural differences. He defines culture as follows: "Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another". By this definition, Hofstede emphasizes that culture is not a property of the individuals, but of groups. It is a collection of more or less shared characteristics possessed by people who have been conditioned by similar socialization practices, educational procedures, and life experiences. Because of their similar backgrounds, the people in any given culture may be said to have similar "mental programming." Thus, one can speak of the culture of a family, a tribe, a region, a national minority, or a nation; culture is what differentiates the people in a given collective from people in other collectives at the same level (other families, other tribes, and so forth).

Hofstede is a native of the Netherlands and acquired his doctorate in the field of social psychology there. Beginning in 1966, he undertook a massive research project involving a major multinational corporation identified only by the pseudonym HERMES. In the course of this project, some 116,000 questionnaires were completed by HERMES employees at all levels (unskilled workers to top managers) located in 50 developed and less developed nations. The questionnaires were administered in the language of each country; a total of 20 languages were employed. The principal difference among the respondents was culture; all of them were otherwise similar because they were carefully matched for other characteristics such as age, sex, and job category, and all worked for the same corporation.

Using this unprecedented quantity of data, Hofstede was able to distinguish four key elements, or "dimensions", of culture as described below. In other words, Hofstede specified four major dimensions along which the dominant value systems in the 50 countries can be ordered and described.

### POWER DISTANCE (PDI) (PART 1)

This dimension is like all 5 dimensions a continuum between two extremes and only very few national cultures, if any, are wholly at one or the other extreme. Power Distance indicates the extent to which a society accepts the fact that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally among individuals

LARGE	SMALL
High dependence needs Inequality accepted Hierarchy needed Superiors often inaccessible Power-holders have privileges Change by revolution	Low dependence needs Inequality minimized Hierarchy for convenience Superiors accessible All have equal rights Change by evolution

### MASCULINITY vs. FEMININITY (MAS) (PART 2)

It indicates the extent to which the dominant values in a society tend toward assertiveness and the acquisition of things, and away from concern for people and the quality of life. The dimension was labeled "masculinity" because, within nearly all of the 50 countries, men were more likely to score higher on these values than women. This was true even in societies that, as a whole (that is, considering both men and women), tended to be characterized by the set of values labeled "femininity". Hofstede found that the more a nation as a whole is characterized by masculine values, the greater is the gap between the values espoused by men and women in that nation.

MASCULINITY	FEMININITY
Ambitious and a need to excel Tendency to polarize Live in order to work Big and fast are beautiful Admiration for the achiever Decisiveness	Quality of life-serving others Striving for consensus Work in order to live Small and slow are beautiful Sympathy for the unfortunate Intuition

#### UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE (UAI) (PART 4)

It indicates the extent to which a society feels threatened by ambiguous situations and tries to avoid them by providing rules, believing in absolute truths, and refusing to tolerate deviance.

strong	weak
Anxiety, higher stress Inner urge to work hard showing emotions accepted Conflict is threatening Need for consensus Need to avoid failure Need for laws and rules	Relaxed, lower stress Hard work not a virtue per se Emotions not shown Conflict & competition seen as fair play Acceptance of dissent Willingness to take risks There should be few rules

#### INDIVIDUALISM vs. COLLECTIVISM (IDV) (PART 3)

It indicates the extent to which a society is a loosely knit social framework in which people are supposed to take care only of themselves and their immediate families, instead of a tight social framework in which people distinguish between in-groups and out-groups and expect their in-group to look after them.

INDIVIDUALISM	COLLECTIVISM
"I" conscious Private options Fulfill obligations to self Loss of self-respect, guilt	"We" conscious Relationships over tasks Fulfill obligations to group Loss of "face", shame

#### CONFUCIAN DYNAMISM (CDI) (PART 5)

This dimension was added later by Hofstede. It indicates the extent to which a society exhibits a pragmatic future-oriented perspective rather than a conventional historic or short term point of view.

LOW	HIGH
Absolute truth Conventional/Traditional Short term orientation Concern for stability Quick results expected Spending for today	Many truths (time, context) Pragmatic Long-term orientation Acceptance of change Perseverance Thrift for investment

## Values for the five Dimensions

Country	PDI	UAI	IDV	MAS	CDI
Arabic World (ARA)	80	68	38	52	
Argentina (ARG)	49	86	46	56	
Australia (AUL)	36	51	90	61	31
Austria (AUT)	11	70	55	79	
Belgium (BEL)	65	94	75	54	
Brazil (BRA)	69	76	38	49	65
Canada (CAN)	39	48	80	52	23
Chile (CHL)	63	86	23	28	
Columbia (COL)	67	80	13	64	
Costa Rica (COS)	35	86	15	21	
Denmark (DEN)	18	23	74	16	
Eastern Africa (EAF)	64	52	27	41	25
Ecuador (ECA)	78	67	8	63	
El Salvador (SAL)	66	94	19	40	
Finland (FIN)	33	59	63	26	
France (FRA)	68	86	71	43	
Germany (FRG)	35	65	67	66	31
Great Britain (GBR)	35	35	89	66	25
Greece (GRE)	60	112	35	57	
Guatemala (GUA)	95	101	6	37	
Hong Kong (HOK)	68	29	25	57	96
India (IND)	77	40	48	56	61
Indonesia (IDO)	78	48	14	46	
Iran (IRA)	58	59	41	43	
Ireland (IRE)	28	35	70	68	

Israel (ISR)	13	81	54	47	
Italy (ITA)	50	75	76	70	
Jamaica (JAM)	45	13	39	68	
Japan (JPN)	54	92	46	95	80
South Korea (KOR)	60	85	18	39	75
Malaysia (MAL)	104	36	26	50	
Mexico (MEX)	81	82	30	69	
Netherlands (NET)	38	53	80	14	44
New Zealand (NZI)	22	49	79	58	30
Norway (NOR)	31	50	69	8	
Pakistan (PAK)	55	70	14	50	0
Panama (PAN)	95	86	11	44	
Peru (PER)	64	87	16	42	
Philippines (PHI)	94	44	32	64	19
Portugal (POR)	63	104	27	31	
Singapore (SIN)	74	8	20	48	48
South Africa (SAF)	49	49	65	63	
Spain (SPA)	57	86	51	42	
Sweden (SWE)	31	29	71	5	33
Switzerland (SWI)	34	58	68	70	
Taiwan (TAI)	58	69	17	45	87
Thailand (THA)	64	64	20	34	56
Turkey (TUR)	66	85	37	45	
United States (USA)	40	46	91	62	29
Uruguay (URU)	61	100	36	38	
Venezuela (VEN)	81	76	12	73	
West Africa (WAF)	77	54	20	46	16

## TASK 2 "During the Walk"

- | Discuss about the cultural differences and similarities
- | Try to identify possible risks and 'clashes' that you might face during the following weeks
- | Write an essay of 2-3 pages about the results of the discussions in your team
  - how to avoid/solve possible problems
  - remember the good things
- | Be prepared to present your thoughts
- | Post your essays to the Moodle on Friday (15th) at latest 10:00