

HOW TO DO BUSINESS IN FINLAND:

Researching and organizing a
database of knowledge for a cultural training game

Kati Cartmell
Kirsti Earl

Bachelor's Thesis
May 2011

Degree Programme in International Business
Business and Services Management





Author(s) CARTMELL, Kati EARL, Kirsti	Type of publication Bachelor's Thesis	Date 09052011
	Pages 75	Language English
	Confidential () Until	Permission for web publication (X)
Title HOW TO DO BUSINESS IN FINLAND: Researching and organizing a database of knowledge for a cultural training game		
Degree Programme Degree Programme in International Business		
Tutor(s) CRAWFORD, Steven		
Assigned by George Simons International		
Abstract George Simons is the creator of diversophy®, a card-based cultural learning game for businesses, which is the core of this thesis. The original game was created in 1972 and has expanded to include many different cultures. This project was tasked to research and organize a Finnish version of a cultural training game for the diversophy® series of intercultural training products. The completed project addresses issues that foreigners may face when working with Finns, either within or outside Finland's borders. In addition to identifying cultural specific knowledge in business contexts, the project addresses Finnish cultural in general. Primary and secondary research methods were employed to gather knowledge about Finland and Finns that foreign businesspeople might find useful to know, and to identify Finnish values and behaviors that would be beneficial to learn, while paying particular attention to the positive and negative situations foreigners should prepare for. The project identifies common stereotypes associated with Finland and Finns, and seeks to explain the extent that these stereotypes are true or false. Secondary sources, including books and online sources provided key information about Finland's history, culture, game theory and cross-cultural business behaviors. The diversophy® series of intercultural training games was reviewed and is described in this report. Content for the Finnish version of diversophy® was also generated from primary sources, and was based in part on the researchers' own personal experiences, a questionnaire completed by businesspeople in Finland, and feedback provided from students at JAMK University of Applied Sciences. The data collected from the primary and secondary research was then synthesized into a set of questions and answers for the Finnish version of diversophy®. In conclusion, all five categories of cards were well received by the test group and showed that they would be beneficial to foreigners who wish to do business in Finland or with Finns. By playing the game players will have a good idea of what Finnish culture and Finnish people are genuinely like. All game cards that were created for the thesis have been accepted by Mr Simons and are now included in the official Finnish version of diversophy®.		
Keywords Culture, Cross-Cultural Business Behaviors, Values, Game-Based Learning, diversophy®, Finland, Intercultural Training		
Miscellaneous		



Tekijä(t) CARTMELL, Kati EARL, Kirsti	Julkaisun laji Opinnäytetyö	Päivämäärä 09.05.2011
	Sivumäärä 75	Julkaisun kieli Englanti
	Luottamuksellisuus () saakka	Verkojulkaisulupa myönnetty (X)
Työn nimi HOW TO DO BUSINESS IN FINLAND: Researching and organizing a database of knowledge for a cultural training game LIIKETOIMINTA SUOMALAISESSA KULTTUURISSA: tiedon hankinta ja –kokoaminen monikulttuurista harjoittelupeliä varten		
Koulutusohjelma Degree Programme in International Business		
Työn ohjaaja(t) CRAWFORD, Steven		
Toimeksiantaja(t) George Simons International		
Tiivistelmä George Simons on diversophy®n, yrityksiä varten kehitetyn monikulttuurisen harjoittelupelin luoja, ja sitä käytettiin opinnäytetyön perustana. Alkuperäinen peli kehitettiin vuonna 1972 ja siihen kuuluu nykyään monta versiota maailman eri kulttuureista. Opinnäytetyön tarkoitus oli tehdä suomalainen versio diversophy®n monikulttuurisesta harjoittelupelistä. Suomalaisen version haluttiin valottavan niitä asioita, joihin ulkomaalaiset törmäävät työskennellessään suomalaisten kanssa joko Suomessa tai Suomen ulkopuolella, ja tutustuttavan pelaajat suomalaisen kulttuurin saloihin. Tätä projektia varten koottiin paljon hyödyllistä tietoa niin Suomesta kuin suomalaisistakin, heidän käytöstavoistaan ja arvoistaan. Peli opettaa valmistautumaan niin hyvin kuin huonoihinkin tilanteisiin, joihin ulkomaalaiset saattavat päätyä suomalaisten kanssa asioidessaan. Pelaajat oppivat myös, mitä stereotyyppisiä Suomeen ja suomalaisiin usein yhdistetään ja kuinka paljon totuutta näissä stereotyyppioissa piilee. Opinnäytetyössä käsiteltiin kulttuuria yleisesti, monikulttuurista liikekäyttäytymistä, Suomen historiaa ja kulttuuria, pelaamiseen perustuvaa oppimista ja diversophy®a. Kirjojen ja Internetin hyödyntämisen lisäksi opinnäytetyön aikana saatu tieto perustui tekijöiden omiin kokemuksiin, heidän teettämäänsä verkkotutkimukseen sekä peliä testanneiden opiskelijoiden antamaan palautteeseen. Lopputuloksena, testiryhmä otti kaikki viisi luotua korttikategoriaa hyvin vastaan ja vakuutti, että ulkomaalaiset voisivat hyötyä pelistä halutessaan työskennellä suomalaisten kanssa. Ihmiset saavat hyvän kokonaiskuvan, minkälaisia suomalainen kulttuuri ja suomalaiset ihmiset oikein ovat pelaamalla harjoittelupeliä. Herra Simons hyväksyi kaikki opinnäytetyötä varten luodut kortit ja liitti ne viralliseen suomalaiseen diversophy® versioon.		
Avainsanat (asiasanat)		
Kulttuuri, monikulttuurinen liikekäyttäytyminen, pelaamiseen perustuva oppiminen, diversophy®, Suomi		
Muut tiedot		

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 Introduction to diversophy®	3
1.2 Research Questions	4
1.3 Method	5
2 CULTURE	5
3 CROSS-CULTURAL BUSINESS BEHAVIORS.....	13
4 FINLAND	16
4.1 History of Finland	16
4.2 Finnish Culture.....	18
5 GAME –BASED LEARNING	20
6 DIVERSOPHY®	22
6.1 History.....	22
6.2 Object of the Game	22
6.3 Rules of the Game	23
7 THE FINNISH VERSION OF DIVERSOPHY®	24
7.1 Preparation	24
7.2 Creation	27
7.2.1 diversiSMART	27
7.2.2 diversiCHOICE.....	28
7.2.3 diversiRISK.....	29
7.2.4 diversiGUIDE	30
7.2.5 diversiSHARE	31
8 RESULTS/CONCLUSION.....	34
8.1 diversiSMART	35
8.2 diversiCHOICE and diversiSHARE.....	36
8.3 diversiRISK	38
8.4 diversiGUIDE	40
8.6 Stereotypes.....	41
8. 7 Conclusion.....	43
REFERENCES	45
APPENDICES.....	47
Appendix 1. Online Survey questions and answers	47

Appendix 2. Feedback answers to Finnish version of Diversophy®	71
--	----

1 INTRODUCTION

Finland is still quite an unknown country to the rest of the world. The general public including many business people do not know much about this extraordinary northern country, its people and its culture. At the same time, Finland is working to find its place in the business world and has the potential to be a great product/service provider, business partner and customer to many foreign companies. Because of the lack of knowledge about Finland and Finns, problems and challenges can arise with can hinder successful business deals.

So when one of our lecturers and now thesis advisor approached us with this client-focused project, one that would illuminate much about Finns and business in Finland, we thought this was an excellent opportunity to contribute to the knowledge base about doing business with Finns. The researchers for this project come from different cultural backgrounds - Kati is a Finn married to a British citizen and has lived her whole life in Finland, and Kirsti is an American with Finnish and German heritage who has lived the majority of her life in America but has also lived in Germany and Finland. We believed that we could effectively combine our different personal and professional experiences and perspectives of Finland and Finns as partners on this project. In this report we will present and discuss the theoretical aspects of our project including the definition of and concepts related to culture, cross cultural business behaviors, the history and culture of Finland, game based learning and finally the diversophy® series of cultural learning games. After developing the necessary background information, we will then discuss the game content creation process and testing. The report will conclude with our assessment of the results.

1.1 Introduction to diversophy®

Diversophy®'s website (2009) states that diversophy® is a “game designed to develop global & local competence in its players”. Diversophy® is available as a card game or as an online game, with customizable solutions available in either form. Small and large

firms, universities and consultants are just a few of the many types of organizations that can benefit from the diversophy® game series. Basically, though, anyone who is interested in increasing their intercultural knowledge would benefit from using the diversophy® game (diversophy®, 2009).

George Simons, the creator of diversophy®, provided us with the specifications for the project. The objective was to create 300 game cards, 60 in each of the five categories: diversiSMART, diversiGUIDE, diversiSHARE, diversiCHOICE and diversiRISK. These cards were to address the problems and challenges foreigners face when working with Finns within Finland or from abroad, as well as illuminating Finnish culture at a more general level. We would then upload these cards to an online database where members of the George Simons International team would review our cards and provide feedback. Once all of the cards were approved by George Simons International, our project for them would be complete.

As a means of testing our results we also planned to test our cards with students at our university to obtain feedback concerning the accuracy of the content of each card and the playability of the entire set.

More detailed information about diversophy® is provided in Chapter 6.

1.2 Research Questions

To achieve the objectives we need to provide answers to the following questions:

diversiSMART: What are some useful facts about Finland and Finns?

diversiSHARE: What Finnish values are beneficial to learn?

diversiCHOICE: What Finnish behaviors are good to know?

diversiRISK: What types of situations (positive and negative) should foreigners prepare for?

diversiGUIDE: What words of wisdom can be found about Finland and Finns?

What sorts of stereotypes are commonly associated with Finland and Finns? To what degree are these true or not?

Five of the six research questions relate to specific categories within the diversophy® game. The sixth research question can be associated with any of the five categories and can provide very useful information in a general sense and also specifically to card content.

1.3 Method

To address the research questions and complete our project we had to gather information from various sources. Primary sources of information used included our own personal life experiences, a survey we conducted online, and content derived from an intercultural communications course targeted at Finns. We also utilized secondary sources such as books and websites. Once our research was completed, we analyzed the data and then began to create the requested 300 cards related to working with Finns and Finnish culture in general that will comprise the Finnish version of the intercultural training game for George Simons International.

2 CULTURE

The world is becoming a smaller place. People are more connected to each other than ever before, from the ease at which products and services are available to all parts of the world to the quick speed with which information and money flow. International communication is commonplace and people are traveling internationally more frequently. As the world around us continues on its path of globalization, people need to have reliable cultural general and culture specific information to prepare them for possible challenges they may face.

First we will discuss definitions of culture and review two different models of assessing culture.

Anthropologist Kluckhohn (1951, 86) states:

Culture consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling, and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts;

the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values.

In their book *Variations in Value Orientations* (1961), anthropologists Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck provide insight on identifying differences in core values across cultures through their Value Orientation Method model. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck and their team suggested that cultures could be differentiated by how they dealt with five common human concerns:

1. What is the nature of human beings?
2. What is our relationship to nature (environment)?
3. What is our relationship to other human beings?
4. What is our mode of activity?
5. How do we view time?

Understanding these concerns would lead to understanding cultural differences. Furthermore they suggested that there were three ways cultures could respond to these concerns. It is also worth noting that they found that all cultures would have these responses at some time. These responses, called "value orientations" are:

Human Nature:

- Evil – Most people are bad and can't be trusted.
- Mixed – There's a mixture of good and evil people. You have to get to know them to find out and some can be changed to good with help.
- Good – Most people are good and can be trusted.

Nature (environment):

- Subjugation to nature – People shouldn't change anything about nature. It's all up to fate or some other higher power.
- Harmony with nature – People should have a balance with nature and themselves.

- Mastery over nature – People control what happens to nature. It's at our disposal to do with as we please.

Relationship to other human beings:

- Hierarchical – There is a natural order in relationships. Some people lead, others follow and that is the way it should be.
- Collateral – Working as group allows everyone to share responsibilities and no one is alone.
- Individual – Each person should have a say and control over their lives.

Mode of activity:

- Being – People are content with just existing. No great effort in life is needed.
- Becoming – People are content with focusing on inner growth.
- Doing – People work hard and will be rewarded for their efforts. A person's worth is important.

Time:

- Past – History teaches valuable lessons that people should learn from. Past traditions are important and should be continued.
- Present – Make the most of the present moment. Don't think about yesterday or worry about tomorrow, live for the moment.
- Future – Setting goals and planning for the future is the only way to make grow and change.

The Value Orientation Method model has been tested in different cross-cultural situations through the collaboration between the Kluckhohn Center for the Study of Values and researchers from various backgrounds. The Value Orientation Method model can be used in research analysis or as an awareness-building tool (Kluckhohn Center, 1995).

Organizational sociologist Geert Hofstede defines culture as “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (2001, 9). In layman’s terms, it is the way we learn to view the world and how we behave in it. Our culture is taught to us by our families, friends and communities and from them we learn how to communicate and how to behave. Nationality, region, religion, and race are just a few different ways cultures can be defined. Hofstede created a cultural dimensions typology based on research conducted with offices of the multinational corporation International Business Machines (IBM) around the world. Hofstede’s national culture differences research is the largest of its kind to date and took over a decade to complete. Through his research Hofstede’s early work isolated four independent dimensions of culture differences based on national and regional groups. A fifth dimension (Long Term Orientation) was added later based on a different international study Hofstede used which was based on questions provided by Chinese managers and employers. Since Finland was not one of the countries used in the fifth dimension study we have chosen to only mention its existence. Each country was scored on a scaling system (0-100) for each dimension. Scoring higher or lower on each index meant that the dimension and its polar opposite dimension was more prominent in that group (Geert Hofstede™ Cultural Dimensions, 2009). The five dimensions of national culture are:

1. Power/ Distance (PDI)
2. Individualism (IDV)
3. Masculinity (MAS)
4. Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)
5. Long-Term Orientation (LTO)

To allow for some comparison the graph on the following page shows where Finland, USA and China scored in relation to the four dimensions.

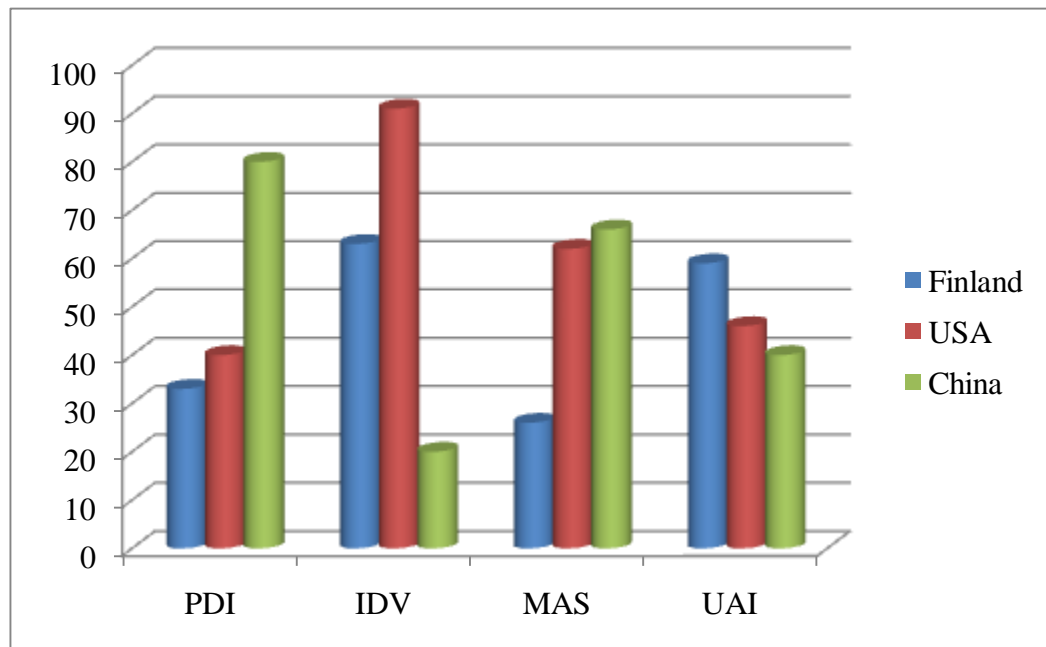


Figure 1 Hofstede's Cultural Dimension results for Finland (ClearlyCultural 2009)

To fully understand what these scores for Finnish culture mean, further explanation must be provided about the dimensions themselves as well as how they can be seen in a country's culture.

Power/ Distance

This dimension refers to the amount of inequality that is expected and accepted by both leaders and followers of a society (Geert Hofstede™ Cultural Dimensions, 2009).

In low power distance cultures one can find:

- Equality amongst those in power and those with less power
- Employees are trusted with important tasks
- Accountability is shared between employee and supervisor or accepted by supervisor who views it as part of their managing responsibilities
- Management socializes with their employees.
- Liberal democracies.
- Societies tend to favor egalitarianism.
- Flatter organizational structure common (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

In high power distance cultures one can find:

- Open display of rank amongst those in power.
- Employees are not trusted with important tasks and specific instructions are provided by management.
- Employees assume responsibility for errors.
- Management and their employees seldom have personal relationships.
- Societies tend to favor totalitarianism.
- Social class divisions are usual.
- Hierarchical organizational structure common (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

According to Hofstede's model, Finland scored 33 out of 100 which would be considered more towards a lower power distance culture (ClearlyCultural 2009).

Someone from a culture with a higher power distance score who is working with Finns or in Finland may find that their position of authority may not produce the same amount of effect as it would in their own country, whereas someone from a culture with a lower power distance score who works in Finland or with Finns may find that in Finland there is more bureaucracy within both the government and companies (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

Individualism

Individualism versus collectivism refers to how strong a person's ties are with those around them. Societies where people are expected to look after themselves and their immediate families are considered individualistic, whereas in societies where people are part of connected group, such as extended families (grandparents and other relatives) that look out for each other's wellbeing, are considered collectivist (Geert Hofstede™ Cultural Dimensions, 2009).

In individualistic cultures the following characteristics are usual:

- A person's identity is centered around oneself
- Personal success and aspirations are sought after
- Personal ambitions are strived for with little concern for others.
- 'Individualism' is promoted through varying personal life style choices.

- Laws are in place to protect the rights of the individual (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

In collectivist cultures the following characteristics are usual:

- The group is more important than oneself.
- Conformity is desired and considered a positive.
- What's best for the group outweighs personal goals and ambitions.
- The rights of the common good are more important than the individuals
- Laws provide direction, reliability, and respect (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

According to Hofstede's model, Finland scored in the middle range (63 out of 100) of the individualism scale (ClearlyCultural 2009). For someone from a culture with a higher score, meaning more individualistic; who works in Finland or with Finns may find it unusual that praise is given to the team as a whole and not specific individuals to avoid causing people embarrassment. For someone from a culture with a lower score, meaning more collectivist, who works in Finland or with Finns may find it strange that business and personal life are kept separate (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

Masculinity

Masculinity versus femininity refers to the degree to which gender roles within a society overlap. Feminine roles are associated with nurturing, and with an emphasis on quality of life and relationship building, while masculine roles are associated with assertiveness and with ideals such as competitiveness and prosperity (Geert Hofstede™ Cultural Dimensions, 2009).

In masculine cultures one can find:

- The main goals in life are success, possessions and growth.
- It is sometimes acceptable to solve disagreements with aggression.
- Gender roles are highly differentiated.
- A "Live to work" mentality prevails (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

In feminine cultures one can find:

- The main goals in life are relationships, family and quality of life.

- Disagreements are handled through compromise.
- It's acceptable for men and women to share roles and expect equal treatment in society.
- "Work to live" mentality. (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

According to Hofstede's model, Finland scored low (26 out of 100) on the masculinity dimension scale (ClearlyCultural 2009) and is positioned at the extreme feminine side of the index with its Scandinavian neighbors. Someone from a culture with a high masculine score working in Finland or with Finns may have a hard time understanding that working overtime is not acceptable because Finns place a high priority on their personal time, often putting family before work. Someone from a culture with a lower score, meaning more feminine, working in Finland or with Finns may find the Finnish communication style tends to be brief and to the point, and often unemotional (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance refers to the level of comfort and tolerance for uncertainty and vagueness within a society. In a low uncertainty society strict laws, safety and security measures are put in place to reduce the occurrence of dangerous or risky developments (Geert Hofstede™ Cultural Dimensions, 2009).

In low uncertainty avoidance cultures one can find:

- Usually a young country without an extensive history.
- Diverse population due to immigration.
- Risk is a necessary aspect of business.
- Innovation and breaking limits is valued. (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

In high uncertainty avoidance cultures one can find:

- Usually an older country with established history.
- Homogenous population.
- Risks in business are avoided or at least minimized and controlled for.
- New ideas and innovations are harder to establish (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

According to Hofstede's model, Finland scored in the middle range (59 out of 100) of the uncertainty avoidance scale (ClearlyCultural 2009). Someone from a culture with a higher uncertainty avoidance score who works in Finland or with Finns may need to learn to implement agreed plans quickly, because they would be expected to be accomplished in a faster time scale than perhaps they are used to. Someone from a culture with a lower uncertainty avoidance score who works in Finland or with Finns may find it difficult if new ideas and suggestions are not readily accepted. (Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, 2011).

3 CROSS-CULTURAL BUSINESS BEHAVIORS

The final model we will discuss is Richard Gesteland's Cross-Cultural Business Behaviors model. Gesteland, a management trainer for international companies, found that there are four cultural aspects that cause most of the problems for international negotiators and managers:

1. Deal Focus vs. Relationship Focus
2. Egalitarian vs. Hierarchical
3. Monochronic vs. Polychronic
4. Reserved vs. Expressive

Deal Focus vs. Relationship Focus

According to Gesteland (2001), deal-focused cultures concentrate on tasks while relationship-focused cultures concentrate on people. To understand this better, Gesteland describes nine different business situations and how deal-focused and relationship-focused cultures would behave in them. Firstly, deal-focused cultures are receptive to doing business with strangers while relationship-focused cultures are hesitant. Secondly, when making contact with potential clients deal-focused cultures do so directly or through third party connections where relationship-focused cultures do so indirectly through third party connections or trade shows, and such. Thirdly, after some small talk deal-focused cultures start right away talking business at meetings unlike relationship-focused cultures that prefer to establish trust and build a

relationship before starting meetings. Fourth, during negotiations deal-focused cultures concentrate on clarity of information while relationship-focused cultures concentrate on steering clear of disagreements and work to maintain harmony. Fifth, negotiators from deal-focused cultures are not concerned with maintaining esteem or decorum which is the opposite for relationship-focused cultures where “saving face” is important. Sixth, the communication style for deal-focused cultures is direct and low context, meaning they expect to get and give straight forward information. This is unlike relationship-focused cultures whose communication style is indirect and high context, meaning they do not want to offend anyone and can give information/responses that leave a person unsure of what was actually said. Seventh, when problems or conflicts arise deal focused-cultures are comfortable with handling such matters electronically (phone, e-mail, etc.) while relationship-focused cultures prefer to handle these matter in person. Eighth, during negotiations deal-focused cultures have lawyers right next to them where relationship-focused cultures keep lawyers in the background. In the ninth and last business situation, deal-focused cultures rely on contracts to work out problems unlike relationship-focused cultures who prefer to rely on the relationship they have formed to solve conflicts (Gesteland, 2001).

Countries that are considered deal-focused are: North America, Northern Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Moderately deal-focused countries are: France, Southern/Eastern Europe, Hong Kong and Singapore. Countries that are considered relationship-focused: most of Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Arab world (Gesteland, 2001).

Egalitarian vs. Hierarchical

Egalitarian cultures tend to have informal business behaviors while hierarchical cultures tend to have formal business behaviors. To understand this better, Gesteland describes four different business behaviors and how egalitarian cultures and hierarchical cultures would react in them. The first is the basic communication style which for hierarchical cultures is formal and is a means of showing respect while egalitarian cultures prefer informal means of communication and find it has nothing to do with a lack of respect. Second, for hierarchical cultures status differences are important and larger than in egalitarian cultures. Third, when meeting or being introduced the use of a person’s title

or last name is preferred in hierarchical cultures. In egalitarian cultures it's accepted to use a person's first name. Lastly, business etiquette in hierarchical cultures can be long and complicated while in egalitarian cultures the opposite is true (Gesteland, 2001).

Countries that are considered egalitarian are: Iceland, Norway, Denmark, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the USA. Countries that are considered hierarchical: Latin America, most of Europe and Asia, the Mediterranean region and the Arab world (Gesteland, 2001).

Monochronic vs. Polychronic

For monochronic cultures, or rigid-time cultures, time is of the essence and as Gesteland (2001) stated these cultures "worships the clock". While polychronic cultures, or fluid-time cultures, are concerned more with people than agendas and time. Gesteland (2001) describes the following three different business behaviors and the reaction of monochronic cultures and polychronic cultures. First, being on time and schedules are very significant to monochronic cultures unlike polychronic cultures who value relationships over time related issues. Second, deadlines and agendas are inflexible in monochronic cultures and the opposite is true for polychronic cultures. Finally, interruptions in meetings infrequently occur in monochronic cultures and again the opposite is true for polychronic cultures (Gesteland, 2001).

Countries that are considered monochronic are: Japan, North American and Nordic and Germanic Europe. Moderately monochronic countries are: Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, South Korea, South Africa, Russia, Southern Europe, most of Eastern Central Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Countries that are considered polychronic are: South and Southeast Asia, Latin America, the Arab World, and most of Africa (Gesteland, 2001).

Expressive vs. Reserved

Differences in nonverbal communication can cause misunderstandings during negotiations because body language and how we interpret it can send stronger signals than what we say. Gestures, eye contact, personal space, and touch behavior can each have different meanings depending on what culture a person is from. Gesteland (2001) describes the following three different business behaviors and the reaction of expressive cultures and reserved cultures. To start, expressive cultures are

uncomfortable with silence, speak with loud tones and speak over one another or interrupt each other during conversations. Reserved cultures speak with softer tones, are comfortable with silence and rarely interrupt in conversations. Secondly, expressive cultures are comfortable with half an arm's length in personal space while reserved cultures are comfortable with an arm's length of personal space. Patting on the back or touching of an arm is acceptable physical contact in expressive cultures unlike reserved cultures that prefer nothing more than a hand-shake in terms of physical contact. Thirdly, in negotiations expressive cultures show signs of genuineness and interest by using direct, steady eye contact whereas reserved cultures prefer to avoid it. Lastly, the uses of hand and arm gestures as well as animated facial expressions are used with ease in expressive cultures which is the opposite for reserved cultures. (Gesteland, 2001).

The following are considered very expressive countries: Latin America, Latin Europe and the Mediterranean region. Countries with varying degrees of expressiveness are: Africa, South Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Eastern Europe, Canada and the USA. These countries are considered reserved: Nordic Europe, Germanic Europe and East and Southeast Asia. (Gesteland, 2001).

4 FINLAND

4.1 History of Finland

Finland is a small country situated in Northern Europe and shares a border with both Sweden and Russia. Finland is often referred to as the land of a thousand lakes but in fact it has over 180 000 individual lakes and 69% of the country is covered by forests. (Finland Guide, 2009)

Finland was once ruled by Sweden. The Swedish era lasted from 1249 till 1809. During this time Swedish became the dominant language of nobility, administration and education but Finnish was the language spoken by the majority of the population. In the 16th century the Finnish clergyman Mikael Agricola was the first person to publish

some written works in Finnish, and so he is often referred to as the father of the Finnish written language. (History of Finland, 2009)

In 1808, the Finnish war was fought between Russia and Sweden and as a result the Russian Empire gained possession of Finland. During the Russian era the Finnish language started to become more prominent, which led to a strong Finnish nationalist movement from the 1860s onwards. Between 1866-68 one of the largest famines in European history struck Finland, killing 15% of the entire population. The famine led to the Russian Empire easing its financial regulations. After that, investment rose over the following decades and economic and political development grew rapidly. (Facts about Finland, 2009)

In 1906 the relationship between Finland and the Russian Empire began to deteriorate when the Russian government attempted to restrict the amount of freedom granted to the Finnish people. This led to an increased desire for independence which was finally granted in 1917. The following year a short but bitter civil war took place between those who wanted to follow the Russian example of communism and those who wanted democracy. The democrats won the war, paving the way for what is now considered to be one of the most non-corrupt governments in the world. (Facts about Finland, 2009)

While the rest of Europe fought the threat of Nazi Germany, Finland was involved in its own Winter War against Russia, which had decided to attempt a reinvasion and retaking of Finland. Despite Finland being outmanned four to one, and with Russia having 30 times as many aircraft and 218 times as many tanks, Finland outfought the Red Army. As it was the middle of winter, the Finnish army was able to rely heavily on their ability to ski quickly across rough terrain. Finnish forces were able to move swiftly from one location to another, perform a surprise and devastating attack and then withdraw before the Russians had time to organize an effective defense. (History of Finland, 2009)

Finland was able to stand firm against the Soviet assault for far longer than the Russians had expected. This led to signing of the Moscow Peace Treaty which ended the hostilities but resulted in Finland having to surrender a large portion of land in the southeast along the Russian border as well as twenty percent of its industrial capacity.

Finland then established trade with some of the Western powers, such as the UK. Along with its obligation to hand over reparations to the Soviet Union, this caused Finland to morph itself from an agricultural based economy to an industrialised one, and then eventually to one based upon information technology in the latter part of the 20th century. (History of Finland, 2009)

The Nokia company is perhaps the perfect example with which to describe modern Finland. The company itself started out simply manufacturing tires, boots and other rubber-based products before moving into the mobile communications sector. Nokia is Finland's most famous and lucrative export worth approximately \$34.9 billion. So it comes as no surprise that Finland leads the way in mobile phone usage and also has the highest number of internet connections per person than any other country in the world. Most Finns now do most of their banking over the Internet and checks have long since become a thing of the past. Schools and businesses are also usually well equipped to deal with all IT related activities. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2009)

Finland is a democratic society, consisting of a President (currently Ms. Tarja Halonen), Prime Minister and a series of MPs, all of whom are elected by the public. A President's term lasts for six years and each President can run for a total of two terms. The only exception was Urho Kekkonen, who was President from 1956 until 1982, after which the law was changed. The President is tasked with selecting the Prime Minister who is then responsible for the day-to-day running of the country. Currently there are five main parties: the Centre Party, the National Coalition Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Left Alliance and the Green League. The Centre Party is the current governing party. Finland joined the European Union in 1995. It said goodbye to the old Finnish 'markka' when it became one of the first countries to adopt the new Euro currency on January 1st 2002. (Finland Guide, 2009)

4.2 Finnish Culture

Finnish culture has been influenced by its geographical location as well as the colorful events that took place in the country's history. These days the culture is not hugely different when compared to other European and Nordic cultures, however, there are

some subtle differences that separate Finnish society from others. (Finland Guide, 2010)

Finland is known as a low context communicating culture, which means that the sender is responsible for the meaning in a message, whereas in a high context communication culture the onus is on the receiver to form the meaning. Finnish people take words very seriously and a person is taken at his or her word. An old Finnish proverb states, "Take a man by his word and a bull by its horn." They expect everybody to mean what they say, and to them the value of words cannot change according to when and where they are said. Finns listen very carefully and will wait until the other person has finished before commenting on it. (Finland Guide, 2010)

Finnish etiquette and behavior codes are rather relaxed and people tend to base their opinion of somebody on a long-term assessment of a person's actions. It can take a Finn a little longer to open up to a new person but once they do, you have a friend for life. (Kwintessential Finland, 2010)

Finns are often described as honest, humble, hard working, serious and quiet. However, culture is changing steadily, so some of these statements may not be as accurate today as they once were with regards to the younger generations. (Kwintessential Finland, 2010)

Finnish society places a high value on nature and on the outdoors. A large percentage of the population still goes berry and mushroom picking in the autumn, a hobby these days but originally a necessary survival skill dating back hundreds of years. Hunting and fishing are also still popular, but tightly controlled by the government to prevent animal and fish populations from falling too low. (Kwintessential Finland, 2010)

Peace and quiet are important things in Finnish culture. Many Finns, despite living in the city, keep a summer cottage somewhere in the countryside. Often the cottages may be lacking in modern conveniences, such as running water and electricity, but this can often be thought of as an even better way to escape from the hectic world of modern daily living in the 21st century. The cottages are almost always located near a river or lake, which is ideal for swimming and cooling off after a long session in the sauna.

The Finnish sauna experience has a culture and a stack of rituals of its own. There are three types of sauna (wood burning, electric and smoke) and it's almost guaranteed

that one of these types can be found inside every Finnish home or in the garden. The sauna can be considered as a cornerstone of Finnish culture. A Finnish person will almost undoubtedly mention the sauna first if asked to describe his culture to a foreigner. Although there is no set amount of times per week a person should visit the sauna, two to four times a week is typical of modern society. (Finland Guide, 2010)

At the end of 2002 there were 1,212,000 saunas in Finnish homes with a further 800,000 summer cottages and in public locations such as swimming pools. That translates into one sauna for every two people in Finland. (Kwintessential Finland, 2010)

Although Finland is a Nordic country, its language is not related to its neighbor countries such as Norway or Sweden. In fact, its language is part of the Finno-Ugric group and more closely related to Hungarian, although the two languages are not mutually understandable. Finland's two official languages are Finnish and Swedish with around 6% of the population using Swedish as a first language. Most of these people live in the southwest of the country near the coastline. The rest of the population uses Finnish as a first language with the exception of the Sami people in the far north. (Finland Guide, 2010)

5 GAME –BASED LEARNING

As Moursund so eloquently states using an adaptation from Shakespeare (2006, 6):

All the world's a game,

And all the men and women merely players:

They have their exits and their entrances;

And each person in their time plays many parts...

The use of games can be found in various environments from schools and universities to business training and workshops. Educational expert Dr Benjamin Bloom created Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domain, a model that centers on the mastery of

subjects and the elevation of higher forms of thinking, rather than just the simple transferring of facts. As can be seen in the below there are six levels in ascending order.



Based on Bloom, Benjamin (1956). Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domain

The lowest is Knowledge, the recollection of previous learned information, followed by Comprehension, or the understanding of information, the Application, or using learned information in new ways, followed by Analysis, or breaking down the information for comprehension, and then Synthesis, or putting the information together in a different way, and, finally, Evaluation, or reviewing the value of information (Bloom, 1956). The use of games can assist in achieving all of the described levels in Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domain.

In training and workshops, the use of games creates an environment where the players themselves produce the learning. They are able to use the new information and skills directly within the game environment (Dwyer, 2009). Games work as rule-based learning systems. They create situations in which players participate actively, make choices using strategic thinking, solve complex problems, seek content knowledge, receive constant feedback, and consider the view point of others (Tang, Hanneghan and El Rhalibi, 2009).

Dwyer (2009) states: "For games to be effective, they must be related to the workplace by providing knowledge, reinforcing attitudes, and initiating action that is important to job success. They must also teach people how to think, access information, react, understand, and create value for themselves and their organizations. Games must also allow for reflection. That is, they must be debriefed and in many instances they need to be facilitated."

6 DIVERSOPHY®

6.1 History

George Simons first developed diversophy® in 1972. It was developed as a tool to help train the student assistants who lived in university residences. These resident advisors required skills in order to handle the conflicts that living in a multicultural environment brought, as well as to help younger students to deal with the challenges and problems that they would face once they were immersed in their multicultural surroundings (diversophy®, 2009).

In 1992, the game was redesigned with the cooperation of MULTUS Inc. The newly expanded game was used to aid diversity training in the USA. Available in a full board game format involving a colorfully laminated playing surface, dice, traps such as ‘Stereotypes,’ and challenges such as ‘Learning how to behave,’ the game focused on having the players deal with questions about cultural differences and how to cope with them. A conference version was created in 1995 to cater to a larger number of people. 1998 brought about the combination of the original board game and the conference version to what is now the current, standard version of diversophy®. This version is used with cards or cards and dice. Currently there are more than 50 versions in various languages of the card version of diversophy®. In 2009, diversophy® was made available online also in a multitude of languages. Diversophy® continues to improve and develop its games with the help of players and developers worldwide. Over the years the game has evolved and changed to suit our modern way of life while still holding on to the basic idea of teaching people to cope with and to accept the diversity of our world’s many different cultures (diversophy®, 2009).

6.2 Object of the Game

Within a multicultural group, each person’s culture and personal experiences create diversity. This diversity can draw the “creative, social and productive potential” of the group (diversophy®, 2008). Developing diversophy®, the perception and ability to

notice, comprehend, deal with and value the differences we find in others is the primary objective of the diversophy® game (diversophy®, 2008).

The diversophy® website (2008) calls these perceptions and abilities – diversAbilities and lists them and their reflection in the game. Because these diversAbilities are so important to the game we chose to directly quote them from the diversophy® website (2008) so none of their meaning is lost in interpretation:

Awareness — alertness to the reality of the differences found in other individuals and groups and in their outlook and experiences. A willingness to "play the game" both in learning and life.

Curiosity — about our selves and others. This leads us to **diversiSMARTS**, a growing range of knowledge about one's own culture and about people different from oneself.

Respect — allows us to see others as experts about their own culture and accepting them as our **diversiGUIDEs** as we learn about them and from them.

Tolerance — is not just "putting up with others." It means acquiring an attitude that refuses to give or take offense when responding to others' differences or even to their insensitivity toward us. Tolerance enables us to **diversiSHARE**, to give each other of ourselves and our experiences in order to appreciate and learn from each other.

Sensitivity — avoidance of words and behaviors that offend or unfairly hinder other individuals or groups from exercising their potential. Sensitivity leads to sound **diversiCHOICES** in how we behave toward others.

Ownership — sensing ourselves as stakeholders and agents of the present and future success of working and living together. If all the prejudices, injustices and inequities of the workplace were to disappear at daybreak, we would still face the task of managing our diversity and learning to deal responsibly with the **diversiRISKS** that come our way as a result of sharing each other's cultural turf.

6.3 Rules of the Game

Based on five of the six diversAbilities, the following card categories were created: diversiSMART, diversiGUIDE, diversiSHARE, diversiCHOICE, and diversiRISK.

To get started two or three teams of six are formed. The instructions are read aloud by a member from a team, and a facilitator will explain the purpose of the game and the rules: to win as many points as possible for yourself and the team. To win points, players must provide an answer to the diversiCARDS chosen. Point values are placed at

the bottom left, cards won are kept, and cards lost are discarded. When time is up, the points for each team are tallied. The person with the most points is the team champ and the team with the most points wins the game (diversophy®, 2009).

7 THE FINNISH VERSION OF DIVERSOPHY®

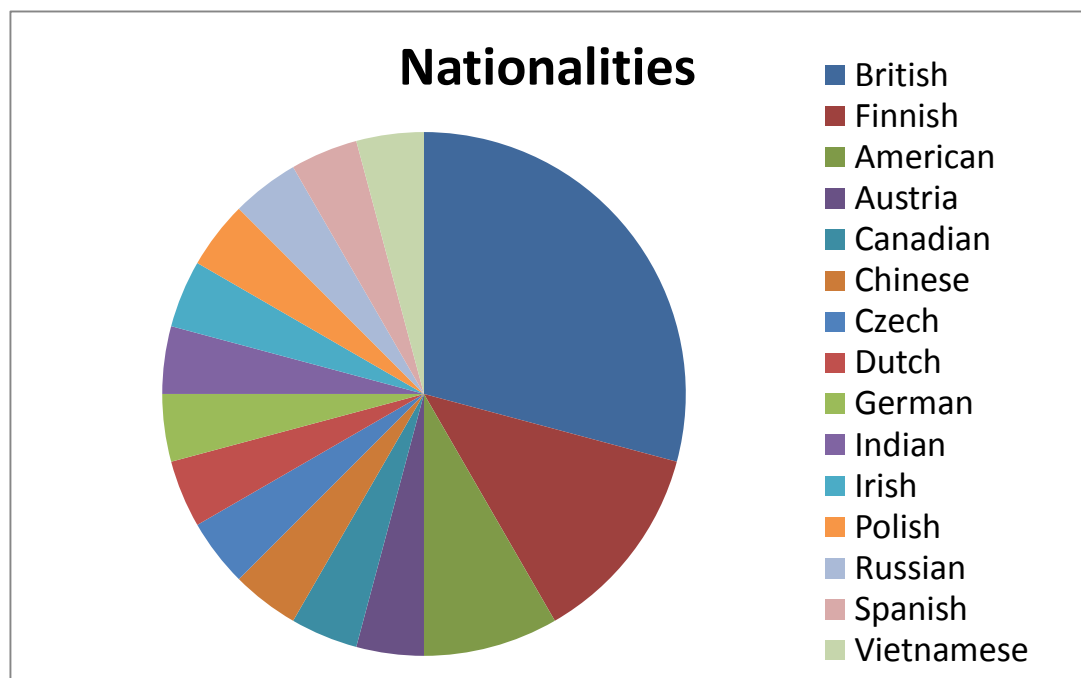
7.1 Preparation

We began the project by doing a lot of research about the main topics relating to our project: theories about culture and cross cultural business behavior, Finland- the country, people, culture, and history - game based learning and the diversophy® game. The theory behind these topics has been discussed in the previous chapters. Now we will review how we applied these aspects into the implementation of our project of creating a Finnish version for diversophy®.

To learn about the theoretical aspects of culture and cross cultural business behaviors we relied on secondary sources such as books and online sources as well as information gained from Mr. Crawford's Cross-cultural Management and Intercultural Communication course. It was important to understand how a person's own culture shapes them and how culture affects relationships with people of different origins.

Next we approached our research on Finland from different angles. We spent time researching myths and stereotypes of Finnish business life and culture, Finnish history and the country's statistics using the Internet and books as secondary sources. Both researchers are personally familiar with Finnish culture and business life and were also able to draw from our own knowledge and experiences. To offer additional perspective on Finland, Finnish culture and stereotypes, we created a ten question online survey which could be completed anonymously; see Appendix 1 to review the complete survey questions and answers. We invited individuals we knew who had lived in Finland for at least one year and had experience with dealing with Finns in a business setting. Some Finns who worked in a multicultural environment were also invited to participate. The survey turned out to be very successful and we were able to acquire twenty-four sets of

opinions about Finland, Finnish people and the associated stereotypes. The participants were eager to share their views on Finland and its culture, both the positive and the negative. Of the twenty four responses, fourteen of them were from women and ten were from men, which created an almost equal balance between the sexes. The respondents were from a variety of nationalities, with seven respondents being of British nationality. The following graph provides all the nationalities of the respondents.



We were keen on hearing what kind of stereotypes people had heard about Finland and Finns and the respondents provided good feedback. Many of the stereotypes the respondents had heard were on the negative side, claiming that Finns are: quiet, shy, distant, unfriendly, passive, and like to drink alcohol a lot. The more positive types of stereotypes heard claimed that Finns are: honest, polite, warm hearted, hard working, punctual, good listeners and become very loyal friends once you get to know them. When asked if they thought that these stereotypes were true, eleven said yes, two said no and the remaining nine said neither, because they found that there were some truth in some of the stereotypes but not enough that the whole nationality could be ascribed, for example, 'shy' or 'unfriendly'. This response summed up their feelings really well: "The stereotypes often reflect first impression made by Finns on Visitors (people from other countries/cultures). Stereotypes should not be taken into account when addressing individuals." Some characteristics could be seen as positive and

negative, such as the Finnish ability to be so comfortable with silence. Some respondents appreciated the fact that Finns do not see the need to fill the silences with nonsense small-talk, whereas some felt that the quiet Finn made them feel very uncomfortable. Overall, it was nice to see that once people had got to know Finns a bit better, they were not seeing them as quiet and introverted drinkers anymore. We could not have been happier with how many good responses we received from the survey. The responses had many similarities and they helped support our own views and experiences very well.

Finally, we also had to become familiar with game-based learning and the diversophy® game itself. Our research on game-based learning was found through books and online sources. It was necessary to learn what made game play learning successful. We reviewed diversophy®'s website to gather valuable information about the history of diversophy® and what the game was all about. Another way we gathered information about game-based learning and diversophy® was by playing the diversophy® game. Our thesis tutor, Steve Crawford, provided us with a multicultural version of the card game, which included information on various cultures from all over the world. We each set up our own game dates and played the game with our friends so we would understand how it works and get a feel from the players' perspective. Next we approached the diversophy® game from an observer's position by attending Mr. Crawford's intercultural communication course. Mr. Crawford facilitated the game and we took notes on the player's reactions, how the game progressed, and any comments and questions that arose during the game playing. Lastly, in Mr. Crawford's course that focused on intercultural communication it was our turn to take the lead and we explained to the students what was about to happen and observed and took notes while they were playing the game. Because this class was composed of all Finnish students, they were asked to come up with some cards they would like to see in the Finnish version we were about to create. We got several great responses as a matter of fact we ended up using some of them in our game. Here are a couple of examples:

In Finnish culture it is often considered self-centered to openly talk about your great achievements and your abilities. You are expected to perform well, but not to brag about it. To what extent and how are people in your culture likely to express or advertise themselves. Tell your team.

And:

When a Brit or an American meets a Finn for a business meeting, the Brit or American may begin the conversation by offering a compliment or asking polite questions (i.e. small talk). In response the Finn will likely reply shortly and then move quickly to the business at hand. Why?

- a) Finns are very busy and they are always rushing somewhere.
- b) Small-talk communication does not exist in Finland.
- c) Finns are not interested in those kinds of things.

Answer is B. The small-talk culture does not exist in Finland. Finns do not mean to be rude or impolite but compliments and chatting just do not come naturally to them.

7.2 Creation

After our preparations were complete, we were ready to take on the core of the project – creating the game cards for the Finnish version of *diversophy*[®]. Our task was to create 300 game cards, 60 cards for each of the following five categories: *diversiSMART*, *diversiGUIDE*, *diversiSHARE*, *diversiCHOICE* and *diversiRISK*. The George Simons International team gave us a developer's packet that provided good instructions and guides for creating the cards in the five categories. All of the cards are in the form of question and answer but in some instances no question is actually asked and differences are found in the ways the answers are given. This report will describe how category of cards based on how the card is structured, the type of content required, and will also provide samples from the Finnish version we created.

7.2.1 *diversiSMART*

These cards consist of a multiple choice question and a correct answer. The content for these cards needed to focus the behavior of Finns. Here are some samples we created:

Students from Mr. Crawford's course on intercultural communications provided content for this card:

Question: In Finland, it is unacceptable for men and women to go to the sauna together.

True or false?

Answer: False. It is very common that both men and women go to sauna together even if they're not related. Work communities might have get-togethers and sauna is naturally the part of program. Nudity is not seen as sexual in this context.

This card's content is based on the authors' personal experiences.

Question: In a discussion Finns are most likely to:

- A. Interrupt others constantly
- B. Listen carefully and wait for their turn to speak
- C. Do not pay any attention

Answer: B. Finns are better at listening than speaking and consider it impolite to interrupt. Having a conversation with a Finn can sometimes be like sitting through a lecture; questions should be asked at the end.

The following card was created based on information found in Patricia Lander's book *The Land and People of Finland* (1990).

Question: Finland was the first European country to grant women the right to vote.

True or false

Answer: True. In 1906, Finnish women were given the right to vote.

7.2.2 diversiCHOICE

These cards also consist of a multiple choice question and a correct answer. The content for these cards needed to focus on facts about Finland and Finns. The following sample cards were all created based on our personal knowledge and experience.

Question: When you meet your Finnish colleague for the first time, you should greet him by:

- A. Shaking hands
- B. Shaking hands and saying your name
- C. Kissing him on both cheeks

Answer: B. It is customary in greeting for the parties to shake hands and introduce themselves. A Finnish handshake is short and firm and involves no reinforcing gestures such as touching the other's elbow or shoulder. Embracing and kissing when greeting is rare in Finland.

Question: When going to a meeting in Finland it is best to arrive:

- A. 5 to 10 minutes early.
- B. At the agreed time.
- C. No later than ten minutes after the announced time.

Answer: A. Finns are punctual to the minute, always advising a colleague of a potential delay even if it is a matter of a few minutes. Being late is considered discourteous.

Question: Your Finnish colleague informs you that "we need to find a solution this problem". This means she/he:

- A. Is using the plural "we" but really means you need to find a solution to the problem.
- B. Is simply being polite and really plans to find the solution on her/his own.
- C. Expects that the two of you will work together as a team to find a solution to the problem.

Answer: C. Finns tend not to use any hidden meanings and speak exactly what they mean.

7.2.3 *diversiRISK*

These cards describe either a positive or a negative situation that then forms the question. The situation needed to relate a situation that could occur in Finland or when dealing with Finns. The person reading the question would reflect on the situation presented and answer it by sharing his/her thoughts with his/her teammates. Here are some samples we created:

The content of this card was based partly on personal knowledge and also information found in Dean Foster's book *The Global Etiquette Guide to Europe* (2000).

Question: You're in a business meeting with a Finnish company close to reaching a deal. Your Finnish colleague suggests going to the sauna to finalize specifics. You agree. When you reach the sauna, the Finnish colleague undresses completely and invites you

to do the same. Going completely naked to the sauna is as natural as it gets for Finns. If you feel uncomfortable going naked, it is acceptable to go in swimwear.

Answer: How would you react in this situation? Tell your team, and then keep this card.

This card was created based upon our own personal experiences.

Question: While in Finland, you are invited to a colleague's home for dinner on Saturday at 7:00 pm. Their home is relatively close to where you are staying and you decide to pick up some flowers from the store on your way there. To your disappointment, none of the stores are open! Thankfully you stop at a gas station which does happen to have some fresh cut flowers saving you the embarrassment of showing up empty handed. It's important to know that stores close at 6:00 pm on Saturdays and on Sundays the larger stores are closed. Smaller grocery stores may be open from 12:00 pm until 9:00 pm.

Answer: How might you think, feel or react in this situation? Tell your team, and then discard this card.

The content for this card was provided by one of the respondents in our survey.

Question: You're on a business trip in Finland and you overhear a Finn telling her foreign friend "You have to excuse us; we only came down from the trees a few years ago!" What the Finn is saying is not meant as criticism against her fellow Finns. It is actually an endorsement of Finland's ability to develop quickly over the last century into the modern world from a largely agricultural background.

Answer: Think this over and share your thoughts before taking your next turn. Keep this card.

7.2.4 *diversiGUIDE*

These cards share Finnish proverbs, sayings and jokes and generates interpretations of them through the use of a question response. The individual reads the question out loud to his/her teammates and the question is answered by either the reader or another teammate commenting on the card. The content of these cards were based on

the website of Centre for International Mobility CIMO, Facts about Finland (2005).

Here are some samples we created:

Question: The Finnish proverb "*Kaveria ei jätetä!*" means "Never leave a buddy behind!" It became the Finnish soldiers' motto during the Winter and Continuation Wars that took place during World War Two. Soldiers would even try to bring back the dead bodies of their fallen friends if at all possible.

Answer: After reading this card aloud to your team, you may also tell them how or when this information may be useful to you. Keep this card and take another.

Question: Finns are very interested to know what foreigners think of them and their country so do not be surprised if this topic pops up quite soon after meeting a Finn for the first time. Make sure you are prepared to say a few things but keep the statements vague and round so you won't offend or embarrass the Finn.

Answer: After reading this card aloud, any team member, including you, may comment on it. Keep this card.

Question: In the old days Finns used to say "If a sauna, whiskey and tar do not help, the disease is fatal." It gives an idea what they used to do when they got ill.

Answer: After reading this card aloud, any team member, including you, may comment on it. Keep this card.

7.2.5 *diversiSHARE*

These cards describe an aspect or behavior of Finnish culture that informs the card's question. The person reading the card answers the question by describing to his teammates how a similar aspect or behavior in his or her own culture would be handled. Sometimes the cards also provided something for the teammates to say or do in response to what the reader shared. Here are some samples we created:

This card was based on the information we got from Kwintessential Finland website (2009).

Question: Finns are more individualistic than many countries, therefore the Finnish idea of working as a team would tend to be that of a group of capable individuals being given the opportunity to complete a well-defined task separately, which when put

together, would enable the team to reach its goal. The team leader would be expected to lead from the front, by outlining the goals and team roles, before taking a step back and allowing each member of the team to work on their assigned part of the task alone.

Answer: After you share each player may tell the group in which teamwork environment, yours or the Finnish one they would feel most comfortable working. Keep this card.

The content of this card was based on our own experiences.

Question: Finns tend to keep more personal space than most other European countries. They prefer to not sit next to a stranger on a bus or a train unless they have to, often choosing to stand instead. Also in queuing they will try to make sure that there is no chance of a body contact. They do not do this to be rude, it is their way of being polite and respecting everybody else's privacy. How much space is considered 'personal space' in your country? Would you happily sit next to a stranger on the bus?

Answer: Share your thoughts with the group. Discard this card. After sharing, each member in the group can show by moving his chair, how close they would like to sit to someone.

The content for this card was provided by one of the respondents in our survey.

Question: There is a saying: An introvert Finn is one that looks at his shoes while talking to you. An extrovert Finn is one that looks at your shoes while talking to you.

Answer: What does this tell you about Finns? How would you describe your own culture in terms of introvert and extrovert people?

Drawing from information we had learned through the preparation stage of our project, we started creating the cards. We created a central file that we shared and added cards to. We made sure to review each other's work and give feedback to comply with the diversophy® game guidelines of having another individual other than a George Simons International team member proofreading and reviewing. We were able to get all cards completed and uploaded to the diversophy® online database in a few months time. The George Simons International team was really helpful throughout this period. The creator of diversophy®, George Simons, and his staff reviewed the cards we uploaded and gave us feedback on what was good and what needed adjustments. This

was essential to ensure that the cards we created would match up to the high quality products George Simons International offers.

After the final 300 cards had been reviewed and approved by the client, our project for George Simons International was complete. Having already tested the game in various scenarios: as players, as observers and as facilitators, we felt that we had a good understanding of how the diversophy® game works. In addition we knew that George Simons International team has had many years of experience testing and perfecting the game itself so we did not test the Finnish version of diversophy® in the form of game play. Instead we focused solely on testing the content of the cards and receiving feedback about the content. We decided to ask our thesis advisor, Mr. Crawford, to test the cards in one of his classes. We felt that we should not be present during the testing because this would create a testing environment where the students would have to come to their own conclusions about the meaning and content of the cards. We felt being present would be a disadvantage because the students could clarify anything they were not sure about and this may affect the feedback they provided. Mr. Crawford instructed the students in his intercultural communication course to provide feedback on whether they felt the content in the game would be beneficial for non-Finns who were unfamiliar with Finland and its culture. The students were separated into groups making sure that each group had a Finnish student but also other nationalities. In each group, one student would read the card and let the students answer or comment. Mr. Crawford stated that “each group seemed to really, really enjoy discussing the cards and most everyone was animated” which was wonderful to hear. After the students tested the cards they were given a feedback form to complete with two questions on it:

1. Do you feel that the content is accurate concerning aspects of Finnish culture? Use examples if you can.
2. Do you believe that the content would be useful as a means of introduction to Finnish business and life? Please explain why or why not.

The students were told they could provide their contact information if they wished but it was not required. Only four students of the twenty eight students provided contact information. Of the twenty eight responses, the majority of them felt the content was accurate about Finnish culture and would be a useful introduction to Finnish business and life. We received positive feedback such as:

“Most of the content reflects Finland and Finnish culture accurately although some of the content is differently especially between different generations.”

And

“I think the content is pretty accurate. I have experienced some of the situations myself and by getting to know Finnish people I’ve seen that a lot of the statements are true...These questions are also very helpful for people who come to Finland for the first time. They can really learn a lot about the way Finnish people are and how the business world works here.”

Also

“I think it is a good way to take the first steps into the Finnish culture, especially through the little “humorous” touch of some questions...The information is useful as small things like greetings and small talk ...creates the first impression and start a new business/life contact/relation.”

There was also some feedback provided where the individuals did find the content useful and accurate but pointed out that the cards could not replace real life experiences and also that not every Finn would fit into the stereotypical mold. Several individuals also felt having a Finn present when playing the Finnish version of the game would be an asset as the Finn could provide clarifications when needed. See Appendix 2 to review all of the feedback received.

After reviewing all of the feedback and finding that the majority of feedback was positive we felt that we had successfully completed the testing phase of our work and would complete the final step of our project in answering the research questions and their relation to the game creation. This will be discussed in the next and final chapter.

8 RESULTS/CONCLUSION

This project focused on the creation of the Finnish version of diversophy® and required that we find information that would aid us in answering our research questions, each of which were linked to the categories within the diversophy® game. We will therefore

discuss each question in relation to the diversophy® category it is connected to. This will apply for all questions except the sixth question, which explored the common stereotypes associated with Finland and Finns and discusses to what extent these stereotypes are true. This question applies to all categories and will be discussed last. We will then discuss the process as a whole and thus conclude our project-based thesis.

As stated earlier, to create the cards we used our own personal experiences, an online survey, content provided from Finnish students in Mr. Crawford's course focused on intercultural communication, books, and online sources. The content for the intercultural communication course was described in detail in the preparation section of the thesis and is mentioned again to give credit to this information source. We relied on our personal experiences a great deal and examples of such will be provided in each category. The other sources used provided information specifically for certain categories and will be discussed in the specific category.

8.1 diversiSMART

The diversiSMART cards were designed to help the players to understand what facts about Finland and Finns were useful to know for doing business and living in Finland. When we were creating these cards we based them on our personal experiences as well as reference books and the research gathered from the online survey.

When a foreigner moves to Finland, he or she may not be aware that Finland has two official languages; Finnish and Swedish. Foreigners are strongly encouraged to learn one of these languages but they should be aware of which region of the country they are living in, because Swedish is only used as a first language by 6 % of the population, mostly on the coastal areas. Most official services are also available in other languages, such as English and Russian. (Finland Guide, 2010)

Finns are very fond of nature and like to spend a lot of time close to it. Many families own a summer cottage where they like to retire to for the weekends and summer holidays. These cottages are usually located near water and forests. Finns have a great respect for their local wildlife, waterways and forestry. Lapland is a popular holiday destination among the Finns as well as the foreigners, because of the excellent skiing

possibilities during winter and the beautiful hiking sceneries during summer. During winter months the famous northern lights can also be seen there. (Finland Guide, 2010)

The diversiSMART cards provided us a great chance to teach the players about what aspects of their culture that Finns are particularly proud of. Finns are quite patriotic when it comes to Finnish art, design, music and sports. Nokia is one of the most famous Finnish products in the world, and Marimekko fabrics can be found in fashion stores around the world. Finns love sports, both participating in them and following them, and they can become very competitive with each other.

Many foreigners that move to Finland will adapt to their new surroundings quite quickly and learn common knowledge from their new work colleagues and friends. However, here are a few key facts they should be aware of before moving to Finland.

- Finland is part of the European Union and uses the Euro as its currency. They do not have single cent coins so the prices will be rounded up or down to the nearest 5 cents.
- The Finnish telephone etiquette requires giving your full name both when calling and answering the phone.
- Despite the wild myths, there are no polar bears in Finland.
- There are four seasons in Finland. They celebrate Midsummer in June when the sun remains visible for 24 hours and the opposite happens in December when the sun does not rise at all for one day.
- Finland is covered in snow for 4-5 months of the year and the temperature can even go as low as -35 degrees Celsius. In summer the temperature tends to stay between 18 and 30 degrees Celsius.
- Sauna is a very big part of Finnish culture and it can be found in most Finnish homes. Finns tend to use it a couple of times a week and it can be used after a business meeting or when friends get together.

8.2 diversiCHOICE and diversiSHARE

When creating the diversiCHOICE and diversiSHARE cards we found that similar topics could be addressed and resources used. DiversiSHARE cards were to deal with developing tolerance towards others and diversiCHOICE cards were to discuss developing sensitivity towards others (diversophy®, 2008). To create cards that would identify Finnish behaviors and values that would be beneficial to learn, we thought about types of situations we had experienced. Being in a multicultural university setting we see how other cultures react to Finnish society and how the lack of knowledge can be a hindrance. For example, in some cultures personal physical contact is frequent, such as a touch on the arm or a pat on the back, and is meant as a show of friendliness towards one another. Kirsti being an American is very used to and comfortable with this type of physical contact and noticed in her own experiences that this did not occur in Finland. Personal physical contact in Finland seems to be reserved to handshakes with people they are not close to while hugging is reserved for close friends and family. A card was formed based on this cultural situation.

Books by Dean Foster and Patricia Landers and a pamphlet by Olli Aho provided sources of information about Finnish culture, customs and etiquette and were used as points of reference for creating card content. For example Finns often talk about having “sisu” which can be explained as having determination, perseverance, or acting rationally in the face of adversity (Landers, 1990). This “sisu” is a defining aspect for Finns themselves and was also used for a card topic.

We also needed to address the business side of Finnish behaviors and values and for that we used personal experiences and online sources for reference. Finland’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, Kwintessential Ltd’s website, and Canada’s Foreign Affairs and International Trade website provided tips for doing business with Finns and in Finland. They addressed concepts such as punctuality, work habits, and conversation habits. For example Finns do not usually engage in small talk. In a business meeting with Finns, the conversation will be about business and very little will be shared about their personal lives (Kwintessential, 2010).

There are many complexities to each culture. To provide all of the behaviors and values useful to know about Finland would fill a book so we instead list a few key values and behaviors that we have found most useful for foreigners to know about Finns:

- Honesty – Finland is always near the top of the least corrupt countries in the world (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011).
- Use of Silence – Finns are comfortable with gaps of silence in conversations (*Kwintessential*, 2011).
- Reserved – Finns don't show emotions easily.
- "Work to live" methodology – Finns value free time, their family, and their relationships.
- Punctuality – Being on time is important to Finns and shows you value them and their time (Foreign Affairs, 2011).
- Equality – Gender roles are not so defined and it is accepted that both genders help out in maintaining the home and family.
- Direct communication style – Finns generally do not use small talk and value words that are spoken.
- Modesty – Finns do not boast about personal achievements. (*Kwintessential*, 2011).
- Quality – Finns take pride in their work.

8.3 diversiRISK

To create the diversiRISK cards we needed to consider positive and negative situations that foreigners should prepare for. For these cards we relied entirely on our own creativity and experiences. Having moved to Finland in 2005, Kirsti had many positive and negative experiences being a foreigner in a foreign land. Kati's husband also is a foreigner and Kati was able to gather information from his experiences. We also have had discussions with other foreigners (friends, family, fellow classmates, and strangers) who have moved to Finland and found they too have had similar experiences. Again, it is impossible to list all of the positive situations a foreigner might experience, there are just too many. We will list what in our experience are the positive types of situations foreigners may face:

- Finns are law abiding citizens. They obey laws and expect others to do the same.
- Finland is a safe country. If you lose an item at a store or restaurant, usually the item will still be in the same place or put in the lost and found when you return to look for it.
- Finns have a good health care system and education system. Education at all ages is free.
- When working for a Finnish company, employees will be pleasantly surprised that the “work to live” attitude is embraced by employers.
- Finns love nature and respect the environment. Recycling is free and recycling bins are easily located near residential areas.
- Finns value health and well-being. Finns can often be seen walking and participating in sports.

Here is the list what we feel is the negative types of situations foreigners may face:

- Finns have a strong ingrained sauna culture and nakedness is natural even around strangers.
- It can be hard to get to know Finns. They are reserved by nature and don't usually offer details of the personal life until they get to know you better.
- The “Work to live” work ethic also has negative aspects from the consumer perspective. Weekdays stores close by 9:00 pm, and Saturdays at 6:00 pm. The stores on Sundays do not open until noon and during some parts of the year, some stores are not open at all on Sundays.
- The Finnish language is unique and can be difficult to learn. In some parts of Finland such as rural towns, knowing Finnish is a necessity.
- In the evenings it can seem as if the town or city shuts down. It is generally very quiet at night, with few cars on the road and little noise to be heard. Homes are heated by radiators and most homes do not have air conditioning so it can be eerily quiet at night.
- Finland has a noticeable drinking culture. Since many towns revolve around a city center, public drunkenness can often be seen. At work parties and other social events, alcohol is usually present and freely flowing.

8.4 diversiGUIDE

The main goal for the diversiGUIDE cards was to find words of wisdom about Finland and Finns that the players could benefit from. Data from the online survey proved useful, but most of the information was based on native Finn Kati's own knowledge. She knew all of these proverbs and the sayings that were used in the cards and then did some research online to find out exactly where the proverbs come from and what the true meaning was behind them if she did not already know it.

Most of the Finnish proverbs have been around for years and they reflect Finnish culture and their most important values as well as historical events from the past. The older generation especially can still be heard using most of these sayings but sadly the younger generation is starting to forget about them. Hopefully these words of wisdom won't be forgotten completely.

Many of the proverbs we used in the cards are somehow linked to the hard working characteristic that the Finns have. They believe that all the hard work will eventually pay off even if it does not seem that way at first. Finns like to take risks and give everything a try, "Nothing ventured, nothing gained." They also like to let their actions do the talking "A man is valued by his work, not his words."

Finns are seen as very private and reserved people and this comes across in their proverbs strongly. Finns have been teaching their children to treat everybody equally and how they would like themselves to be treated because you may end up paying for it if you treat others badly. Wisdom is often measured by the actions and not the words and Finns tend to remain quiet if they have nothing to say.

Every culture has its own words of wisdom and we can all benefit from them. Here are a few examples of what Finnish culture has to offer:

- "A friend in need is a friend indeed" – Your true friends are the ones who are there for you during the bad times.
- "One sleeps like one makes his bed" – Every action has its consequence.

- “Repetition is the mother of studies” – New things are easier to learn if you keep repeating them.
- “Whose bread you eat, his songs you’ll sing” – Obey the rules that have been set for you.
- “If a sauna, whiskey and tar do not help, the disease is fatal” – This gives you a good idea what Finns used to do to cure a sickness.
- “A little bit of experience is better than a barrel full of knowledge” – Finns value experience more than anything.
- “Never leave a buddy behind” – Finns value their friendships and make loyal friends once you get to know them.

8.6 Stereotypes

Every culture has its own stereotype, from the wine drinking French to the tea drinking Brit, but only some of these are based in reality. Not all Brits drink tea and not all French people drink wine, but the stereotype persists and can sometimes have a strong effect on what foreigners expect to experience before visiting or moving to a new country.

Kati being in a multicultural relationship and Kirsti studying and living in a foreign country as well as being of Finnish and German heritage gave us a strong knowledge base of Finnish stereotypes before we started our thesis. Our online survey provided further information on what the outside world expected a Finnish person and Finland to be. Some of these stereotypes were familiar, such as the quiet, reserved Finn who likes to spend lots of time in the sauna, to the not so familiar ‘endangered polar bears’ and the ‘hot girls.’

The most common stereotypes of Finns are:

Positive	Negative
Honest	Shy
Loyal friends	Introverted

Love nature and sauna	Quiet
Sporty	Hard to get to know
Reliable	Heavy drinkers

All of these stereotypes appear in our survey data and are true to some extent but of course cannot be applied to every Finn. The first impression can often leave the person feeling as if the Finnish person is perhaps uninterested or shy, however this can often be only temporary as typically most Finns take a little while to open up to new people. Once this happens they can transform into a completely different person, someone who is outgoing and chatty.

When we asked if the respondents felt that these stereotypes were accurate, some firmly felt the stereotypes were or were not accurate while others felt that there was some truth but also misconceptions. We found one respondent's answer particularly insightful: "Like with any stereotypes, there is an element of reality in them, but on the other hand they are often exaggerated and by no means true across the board." We tend to agree with this individual's thoughts and have found that with both the positive and negative stereotypes of Finns do hold some truth but can vary widely from person to person.

The most heard stereotypes of Finland:

- cold all year long
- dark and snow for half of the year
- home of polar bears
- clean and green
- boring

All of these statements also appear in our survey data, when we asked them to list the things that they had heard about Finland before moving here. There is a little truth in most of the statements (apart from the polar bears) but they are exaggerated as well. It is true that the Finnish winter can seem long, cold and dark, especially for those who come from hotter climates, although warm summers help to balance it out nicely.

Finland is clean and environmentally friendly and people like to recycle their waste. The reason why Finland may seem boring to some is because the cities are quite small compared to other major countries. Even the capital Helsinki only has population of approximately 570 000 inhabitants.

The respondents were asked to describe how they see Finland now after having lived there for some time, and how their views have changed. Most said that their positive stereotypes, such as beauty of the countryside etc, had been reinforced by their time in Finland. They now saw their new home country as a safe and quiet place with a good education system. Every country has its good and bad qualities, and no country is perfect.

8. 7 Conclusion

To review, the objective of our project-based thesis was to create a Finnish version of an intercultural training game for George Simons International that would address issues that foreigners might face when working with Finns in Finland or from abroad, and to provide a basic introduction to Finnish culture in general. We were able to complete our objective because we were able to understand some of the key facts about Finland and Finns that are useful to know when trying to identify Finnish values and behaviors that would be beneficial to learn; to be aware of the positive and negative situations foreigners should prepare for; to find words of wisdom about Finland and Finns; to learn common stereotypes associated with Finland and Finns, and to discuss to what extent these stereotypes are true.

Although we had our own experiences to guide us, researching the theoretical aspects provided by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, as well as by Hofstede and Gesteland, helped us deepen our understanding and knowledge about Finnish culture in comparison to other cultures. The research also described Finnish cultural characteristics and we were able to correlate how these characteristics when seen from another cultures perspective can create stereotypes. Studying information about Finland and the Finnish culture helped familiarize us with facts and figures and the history of Finns. The history of every country helps shapes the culture and its people and their customs. Researching the game-based learning and diversophy® was another crucial part of our project because

without it we would not have been able to create the content. We gained a deeper understanding of the diversophy® game in our preparation stage where we tested the game from different perspectives. We most enjoyed being able to play the game because in doing so we learned about other cultures, we had fun and we could see how beneficial our project would be.

The results of the online survey helped support our own views of the stereotypes most common about Finns and Finland. It was reassuring to find that like us many of the respondents found that stereotypes had some truths but were not always factual and not every person fit into one specific stereotypical mold.

Combining the theoretical background, the results from the online survey, testing the game in various roles and our own experiences together was like fitting pieces of a puzzle together. Once we had this valuable knowledge base, we felt confident and comfortable in creating the Finnish version of diversophy®. In addition to Kati's views, the content provided from the Finnish students in Mr. Crawford's intercultural communication course added additional Finnish perspective and was valuable in the card creation.

The last stage of the project was the testing of the content of Finnish version of diversophy®. We were pleased with feedback we received that the game would indeed be a valuable way for foreigners to learn about Finland and Finns.

When we took on this project, the basic concept of creating an intercultural game seemed a relatively simple task but we found that in reality it was a complex learning experience. Kati as a Finn, and Kirsti as an American with Finnish heritage, both gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of our culture. We have expanded our knowledge about cultures and have a greater appreciation of the importance of understanding and respecting cultural differences in a world that is becoming so interconnected.

REFERENCES

Aho, O. (1998). *Guide to Finnish Customs and Manners*. Uusimaa Oy.

Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domain. Referred to on September 29, 2009. The website of George Mason University

<http://classweb.gmu.edu/ndabbagh/Resources/Resources2/bloomstax.htm>

Country Facts. 2007. Referred to on October 4, 2009. The website of Finnfacts

<http://www.finnfacts.com/english/country/>

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (1994). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dwyer, K. 2009. *Training: Using Games to Embed Learning*. Referred to October 20, 2009. The website of Robert Bacal/Bacal & Associates

<http://www.thetrainingworld.com/articles/traininggames.htm>

Foster, D. (2000). *The Global Etiquette Guide to Europe*. Canada: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

Facts about Finland. 2005. Referred to on October 4, 2009. The website of Centre for International Mobility CIMO

<http://www.leonardodavinci.fi/eng-special/facts-finland.html>

Finland Guide: About Finland. Referred to on October 4, 2009 and November 11, 2010.

The website of Visit Finland <http://www.finlandforyou.com/en/web/guest/finland-guide/about-finland/facts>

Geert Hofstede™ Cultural Dimensions. 2009. Referred to on March 9, 2011. The website of Geert Hofstede

<http://www.geert-hofstede.com/>

Gesteland, R. (2002). *Cross-Cultural Business Behavior: Marketing, Negotiating, Sourcing and Managing Across Cultures*. Copenhagen Business School Pr.

History of Finland: A selection of events and documents. 2009. Referred to on September 29, 2009. The website of Pauli Kruhse

<http://www.histdoc.net/history/history.html>

History of Finland. Referred to on September 29, 2009. The website of History World

<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ad02>.

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's Consequences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions. Referred to on March 10, 2011. The website of Kwintessential

<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/intercultural/dimensions.html>

Introduction to Games-Based Learning. 2009. Referred to on September 29, 2009. The website of IGI Global <http://www.igi-global.com/downloads/excerpts/33410.pdf>

Kluckhohn, C. (1951). *The Policy Sciences*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
 Kluckhohn Center. (1995). *User's manual for the Value Orientation Method*. Kluckhohn Center for the Study of Values, Bellingham, WA.

Kluckhohn, F. R., & Strodtbeck, F. L. (1961). *Variations in value orientations*. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Kwintessential Finland: guide to language, society, customs and culture, 2010. Referred to on November 10, 2010. <http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/finland-country-profile.html>

Lander, P.S. and Charbonneau C. (1990). *The Land and People of Finland*. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Moursund, D.G. (2007). *Introduction to Using Games in Education: A Guide for Teachers and Parents*. Available free online:
<http://uoregon.edu/~moursund/Books/Games/games.html>.

Making Sense of Cross Cultural Communication. Referred to on March 8, 2011. The website of ClearlyCultural <http://www.clearlycultural.com/geert-hofstede-cultural-dimensions/power-distance-index/>

Tips for Business Travellers - Finland. 2011. Referred to October 10, 2009. The website of the Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada
<http://www.tradecommissioner.gc.ca/eng/document.jsp?did=11889>

Training: Using Games to Embed Learning. 2009. Referred to on September 29, 2009. The website of The Training and Development Free Resource Center
<http://www.thetrainingworld.com/articles/traininggames.htm>.

Things you should and shouldn't know about Finland. 2009. Referred to on October 1, 2009. The website of Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Department for Communications and Culture <http://www.finland.fi/public/>

Why is diversophy[®] effective? 2008. Referred to September 20, 2009. The website of diversophy[®] <http://www.diversophy.com/whyeffective.htm>

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Online Survey questions and answers

Respondent 1

1. Gender

Answer:

Female

2. What is your nationality?

Germa

n

3. What is your occupation?

Sales

Manager

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

shy, quiet, negative, cold, shortspoken,
drunks,

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

they might be at the first glance but turn out to be quite the opposite ones to dare to get to really know a fin/fins

6. How would you describe Finns?

honest, very open minded towards foreigners (of course only from the ones I met...),
warm-hearted, creative, educated

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

cold, cold, cold, dark, nice landscape, expensive, weird laws on drinking, strict
rules

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

well of course it is cold and dark in the winter, but that is so not all about Finland, there is so much more to it. But yes they are accurate but not all that counts.

9. How would you describe Finland?

beautiful, inspiring, easy accessible,
safe

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

well I dont really have any stories but what I find amusing is that both friends of mine and also customers of mine from Germany always seem to confuse Finland with Sweden. I got greetings for Birthday saying "hope you have fun in Sweden" and questions from customers like "how is the weather in Sweden" etc. All they know is

Sweden and Norway but they maybe wouldnt even know where to point out Finland on a map...

Respondent 2

1. Gender

Femal

e

2. What is your nationality?

Finnis

h

3. What is your occupation?

studen

t

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

Quiet, shy, heavy

drinkers

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

yes

6. How would you describe Finns?

Exactly like people think they are, stereotypes..Then there are always exceptions like me!!!!=)

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

cold, no sun, pure air, beautiful nature, high tech country,

Nokia

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

yes

9. How would you describe Finland?

like all

stereotypes!!!

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

it takes 10 Russians to beat with one Finnish man!!!

Respondent 3

1. Gender

Femal

e

2. What is your nationality?

Spanis

h

3. What is your occupation?

Journalis

t

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

Serious; very shy; have a hard time opening up, but make very loyal friends; they love to drink and be merry (sometimes drink too much); they love sauna and the outdoors, too; very sporty; they don't care a lot about their appearance (dressing smartly, etc.). Very smart with technology. Sometimes geeky, nerdy or "weird". They love music. They are melancholy and sometimes have a depression-prone personality.

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

My experience with Finns is very limited, but some stereotypes are closer to the truth than others. Some I haven't had any experience to check with reality at all.

6. How would you describe Finns?

Quiet, they love their country and traditions, they are quite natural and show themselves as they are, they can be shy and have a hard time socializing, but at the same time try to open up to people, esp foreign people who show interest or curiosity about their country. They prefer comfortable clothing and hairstyles. They are practical people, in that sense. Perhaps not the easiest of people to get to know, but worth the effort. They know how to combine work and leisure. They know how to enjoy life's little pleasures.

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Cold, dark, melancholy, lots of mosquitoes, Santa's home. One of the best education systems in all the world. Beautiful nature. Clean, and environmentally friendly.

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Again, my experience is very limited, but from what I have seen, it certainly is cold (well, that isn't so much a stereotype as a fact, at least if you compare it to most other countries!), and can be melancholy (esp in the winter, with the early dusk) for some. I don't have first-hand experience about the education system.

9. How would you describe Finland?

It's a beautiful country, quiet, usually clean and agreeable. I like how they promote learning of both Finnish and Swedish at school.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

See the above sections... The saying that I like most is that, like I have said above, a Finn will be shy and hard to get to know, but they will give up their heart to you without much resistance or complication.

Respondent 4

1. Gender

Male

e

2. What is your nationality?

British

h

3. What is your occupation?

Lecturer

r

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

They are shy and quiet. They drink a lot. They drink a lot of coffee. They love nature.

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Like with any stereotypes, there is an element of reality in them, but on the other hand they are often exaggerated and by no means true across the board.

6. How would you describe Finns?

Like most other nationalities, very diverse! Some common features are that many of them are very proud of their nationality, very kind and generous, loyal friends once you get to know them, and as a nation, Finland is very goal-oriented - if Finland puts its mind to something, it can be achieved (for example, relatively recent surges in success in the fields of music and technology, and the emergence of Finland as one of the research and development centres of Europe).

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

It is cold. It has very beautiful nature. There is lots of heavy metal music. It has great social security and educational systems.

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Generally, those that I have given above are fairly accurate. As for the ones about social security and education, in my experience they are true more on paper than in reality (of course both of these things are of a good standard here - just not as good as they are often made out to be).

9. How would you describe Finland?

Finland is a strange mix of many things. It is a burgeoning international environment and economic contender, while still failing to grasp some fundamentals of internationalism (again, more international on paper than in reality - although I feel that while many middle aged and older people seem threatened by international presence, i.e. foreigners in Finland, younger people embrace internationalism, which paradoxically is a testament to the groundwork done by their parents' generation). Finland is certainly a country in (constant) transition in that sense. It is a beautiful

country naturally, but not so much architecturally. It has a very interesting atmosphere, being relatively free of traditions that might hold it down as a nation due to its colonial past (Finland is always very ready for change in my opinion) but having many strong and proud traditions that endure. It is also a strange place to live, because of the quick and constant changes in daylight hours and weather through the year, which can lead to a certain level of emotional imbalance and difficulties in self-motivation from time to time, in the autumn-time in particular. It has an interesting geographical position, being on the cusp of both Eastern Europe/Russia and Scandinavia, and it takes cultural and sociological influences from both, making up a unique mix. For a country with such a short history, it is a very dynamic and fast-developing nation.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

None in particular spring to mind right now, but I could give a Finnish joke that I was once told: Two men were at their cottage drinking - they had stocked up on crates and crates of beer, and the only food they had was sausages. After three days of solid drinking, one of the men turned to the other and said "I think we're running out of food and beer", to which the other replied "shut up - we're not here to talk, we're here to drink!" Another funny quote comes from the mother of a friend of mine: "You have to excuse us, we only came down from the trees a few years ago!". True, funny, endearing, and while it could be seen as a criticism, anyone who knows Finland realises what an endorsement it is of Finland's ability to develop quickly over the last century or so into the modern world from a largely agricultural background.

Respondent 5

1. Gender

Female

2. What is your nationality?

USA

3. What is your occupation?

teacher

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

single minded, quiet, stubborn, controlling, smug, introverted, honest, blunt, alcoholics, nationalistic, racist, insecure, passive aggressive, closed culture, sporty, women=controlling, men=passive

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

It depends on the person, but to a degree you do see a grain of truth to the stereotypes, yes.

6. How would you describe Finns?

Security loving, orderly, calm, independent, fair, rule-abiding, insecure

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

The "nanny state" and high taxes, polar bears

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Yes in regards to the nanny state. No in regards to polar bears and perpetual frozen tundra land.

9. How would you describe Finland?

Quiet, peaceful, exotic, remote, beautiful nature, homogenous, a land of dualities and extremes

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

"Never trust a Savolaiset if their mouth is moving" "To be born in Finland is like winning the lottery" "Not even the Scandinavians claim them, they are like the drunk Russian cousins to the Swedes, Danes, and Norwegians."

Respondent 6

1. Gender

Female

2. What is your nationality?

Dutch

3. What is your occupation?

Student

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

Quiet people, drinking, hard to get to know, use the sauna a lot

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

overall slightly more quiet, in general they drink a lot, didn't find it hard to get to know them and if they have private sauna they'll use it more than a public sauna.

6. How would you describe Finns?

nice, good friends, welcoming

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

cold, dark, lots of lakes,

space

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

yes

9. How would you describe Finland?

a beautiful country with great people. a place to enjoy some time but not to permanently live.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

non

e

Respondent 7

1. Gender

Femal

e

2. What is your nationality?

Canadia

n

3. What is your occupation?

Former software developer turned English teacher

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

None, before arriving in Finland the first time. Well, only that Finns love the sauna.

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

They do love the

sauna.

6. How would you describe Finns?

Finns are generally less likely than Canadians to initiate a conversation with strangers and even acquaintances. When you persist to develop friendships with Finns, they tend to be honest, caring, well-educated, and less reserved as time goes on. Finns generally have a good command of English and are quite able to use the language effectively. Some differences in use of direct language and socializing habits is noticeable. This aspect seems to have not been taught in school during English language learning, rather it seems to be something the Finn learns on the job (through trial and error, but only if they figure out what went wrong or if someone points it out -- not an efficient way to learn)

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Before coming to Finland, I hadn't heard any real stereotypes. I only remember that winters were considered similar to those in most parts of Canada, they also have

indigenous people in the North, they are neighbours of Russia, Sweden and Norway.

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Yes. One stupid thing on my part was that I didn't realize that reindeer were real before coming here.

9. How would you describe Finland?

Land of a thousand lakes. It is very similar weather and nature wise to some areas of Canada. Finland is so much farther North than the most populated areas of Canada that they have very long days in the summer and very long nights in the winter.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

Finns are rude ... it isn't generally true, but some are, just like any other nationality. Finns are quiet ... I'd say it's true in some contexts, but get a Finn around their friends and they can be pretty noisy. Finns don't speak if they don't have something important to say ... I've been learning Finnish and found that in Finnish Finns talk about the same stupid things the rest of us talk about.

Respondent 8

1. Gender

Male

2. What is your nationality?

USA

3. What is your occupation?

Business Development
Manager

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

Quiet, shy, non-communicative, honest, hard-working, engineers, they drink a lot.

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

No and yes. Difficult question to answer. Stereotypes usually come from observed behaviors within a certain context. For example, Finns are seen drunk in public. But in reality they are only average consumers of alcohol compared to other Europeans.

6. How would you describe Finns?

That's very hard to answer because there are all types. These are some generalizations that I and people I have talked to have noticed: Finns tend to be more authoritarian than Swedes. Many are good administrators but poor leaders. Finnish employees tend to work well without a lot of supervision, therefore managers tend to keep a distance. Meetings are for giving information and NOT for discussing issues or solving problems. Poor understanding of marketing. Cleanliness and order are VERY important, both in life and business. Pragmatic. Cautious. Efficient. Experts in technology and pretty good

in finance too. Do not communicate, present or articulate well especially in languages other than Finnish. In general, high ethical standards. Environmentally conscious. Lacking emotion (which has both good and bad points). Will not admit they made a mistake (Admitting you made a mistake is considered a sign of weakness).

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Cold, beautiful nature, progressive, good education system, clean and safe, technology, innovative country, boring. very stubborn.

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

In general, yes many are true. However, there are always exceptions and once again, they are all relative.

9. How would you describe Finland?

Good education system especially in science, technology, health care. Poor education system in business, marketing and management. Small, efficient, progressive. Nice nature but can only be enjoyed a few months of the year. Boring (especially Sundays). Lots of education possibilities but a lot of poor quality also.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

"You can always tell a Finn, but you can't tell him much." It's a play on words and the meaning may not always be understood by non-native English speakers. I heard this in the USA several years ago, but I found it to be true here. No matter how wrong they can be, it is very hard to get them to change their behavior. I have met very many who will not accept good advice, no matter how wrong they may be and how good the advice may be.

Respondent 9

1. Gender

Male

2. What is your nationality?

British

3. What is your occupation?

Engineer

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

All Finns are quiet, reserved and private.

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

No

6. How would you describe Finns?

Friendly and
helpful

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

It's a cold country with a strange
language

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

yes

9. How would you describe Finland?

A country with beautiful
landscapes

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

I have heard people say that there are polar bears in
Finland

Respondent 10

1. Gender

Male

2. What is your nationality?

Irish

3. What is your occupation?

Entrepreneur

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

Introvert alcoholics good rally drivers and F1 drivers beautiful women great work ethics
hard workers very polite healthy life style honest people

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Introvert until they drink definitely alcoholics on the week ends at least and all summer
good drivers until there is someone else on the road, but can't drive with others or
accept pedestrians definitely beautiful women half of them have good work ethics,
the other half couldn't care less as Kella gives them more money than half starting jobs
polite, until they drink either real healthy, or stuffing themselves with pulla, candy and
energy drinks incredibly honest

6. How would you describe Finns?

A bunch of raving mad alcoholics who tend to be racist towards any non Finn, especially
in smaller towns. But great fun in the same time, and no matter how drunk or what,
they are usually always honest

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Green long beautiful cold winters a lot of lakes loads of mosquitos loads of moose and elks clean safe place

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

deffinatly green in summer great winters (except last year) decent amount of lakes yeah mosquitos... buggers starting to believe the moose and elks are urban legends clean...ish clearly safe

9. How would you describe Finland?

a good place to live and safe for kids to grow up in

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

an introvert Finn is one that looks at his shoes while talking to you. An extrovert Finn is one that looks at your shoes while talking to you.

Respondent 11

1. Gender

Male

2. What is your nationality?

British

3. What is your occupation?

English language and intercultural communications trainer

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

1. Silent/withdrawn 2. Slow thinkers 3. Distant/introverted 4. Culturally insecure ("other cultures are more sophisticated than ours") 5. Honest 6. Reliable 7. Well educated 8. Hard working

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Sometimes, yes but they have to be taken in context. You have to know the reasons behind the facts. For example, the history of country, I believe, goes some way to explaining the lack of cultural confidence and seeming introvertedness. As a nation, 'loose talk' (being the mindless chatter of those who don't know what they are talking about) as opposed to small talk, is frowned upon therefore people take their time to consider exactly what they need to say. This can lead to an impression of being slow thinking. Of course there are many other factors in play in such circumstances, not the least being the inherent communications culture of turn talking which simply follows different patterns to many other languages.

6. How would you describe Finns?

Honest and reliable Open and helpful once they get to know you (perhaps I mean here, once they trust you) Hardworking Culturally naive to the richness of being Finnish Too much emphasis on formal academic education Overly rigid in applying rules (no room for commonsense) - sometimes :-)

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Dark Cold Polar bears on every street corner Wilderness-like Austere

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Again yes, and no. The winters can be long and dark but are balanced by the long warm summer of midnight sun. As a developed nation with a lot to offer, not only to business from abroad but to domestic companies also in terms of inflowing business. Levi is a prime example of this point. during the winter it is full of skiers and attracts a lot of tourists but that's only 4 out 12 months. For the rest of the year the hotels and shops are empty and the area returns to being a wilderness.

9. How would you describe Finland?

I don't think that as a country Finland markets itself adequately outside its own borders. The wilderness has an enormous potential for eco-tourism and at the moment it is only exploited by a few relatively small companies.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

There are a number of related ideas that come to mind: 1) Once you get to know a Finn you have friend for life in whom you can place total trust. 2) Once you have seen Finland in it's glory (depending on your point of view, summer or winter), you will always feel at home here. 3) Finland is Europe's best kept secret.

Respondent 12

1. Gender

Mal

e

2. What is your nationality?

Britis

h

3. What is your occupation?

Studen

t

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

They like a good drink, they don't talk much and they go to the sauna a lot.

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Yes.

6. How would you describe Finns?

Quiet and suspicious of strangers.

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

That it's cold.

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Yes, in winter!

9. How would you describe Finland?

A country about the same size as the UK but with only 5m people living in it. Lots of lakes and trees. Pretty in the summer and winter but ugly in the spring when everything is dead.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

I heard that it was dark 6 months of the year and that the Finnish polar bears are dying, which of course isn't true. The bears are just fine ;)

Respondent 13

1. Gender

Female

2. What is your nationality?

Russian

3. What is your occupation?

student

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

blond, quiet, a bit slow, wear spectacles

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

maybe just about spectacles

6. How would you describe Finns?

polite, independent, respect your peace but at the same time want you to respect their peace and space as well, don't open up until they are really drunk

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?
lots of snow, clean, there are some polar bears somewhere in Lapland

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?
mostly not, but it's clean in Finland, that's true

9. How would you describe Finland?
beautiful nature, but unfortunately mostly boring same looking towns, same kind of buildings, colored in grey, same shops

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

russian saying "a chicken is not a bird, Finland is not a foreign country"...it sounds funnier in Russian

Respondent 14

1. Gender
Femal
e

2. What is your nationality?
Austria
n

3. What is your occupation?
Studen
t

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?
they are silent drink a lot of alcohol

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?
yes

6. How would you describe Finns?
very shy in the beginning, but if they warm up it sometimes turn out to be friendships for a life-time :)

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?
it is dark all the time in the winter it is cold all the time

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?
n

o

9. How would you describe Finland?

It is the most beautiful country in my opinion and I love to live and study here. I hope to get a job here as well at one point.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

There is non really coming to my mind right now :/

Respondent 15

1. Gender

Male

e

2. What is your nationality?

Polish

h

3. What is your occupation?

Teacher

r

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

Shy and polite No allergy to alcohol Cold and introvert Nature/Forest/Lakes People Important Decisions are made in Sauna

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

The stereotypes often reflect first impression made by Finns on Visitors (people from other countries/cultures). Stereotypes should not be taken into account when addressing individuals.

6. How would you describe Finns?

The following are my long term impressions- as such also stereotypes) Open, pragmatic, hard working, on time, sympathetic listeners, ready to help especially if asked for, polite (not too confuse with undue shyness, or lack of dignity or pride- the frequent mistake made by foreigners), like Dutch flexible to the point, no-nonsense, often straightforward with people they know (not to confuse with simple-minded)

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Country of Lakes Northern Cold Country The East most EU member (Geography)

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Many popular stereotypes include a "grain of truth"- if only for the sheer number of people using them to express their own impressions

9. How would you describe Finland?

If Poland is my "Mother-Country", Finland is my "Wife-Country" (-
:

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

In 1846 a team of three scientific explorers Sam, Simon and Samuli representing USA, UK and Finland respectively, left from Europe to Africa. In Africa they have encountered an animal they have never seen before: an elephant. The first thoughts that cross their minds were: Simon (UK) - how can I use the elephant? Sam (US) - how can I make a business out of the elephant? Samuli- I wonder what the elephant is thinking about me? Source: The joke by Finnish Ambassador at the reception party in Finnish Embassy in Warsaw, Poland

Respondent 16

1. Gender

Femal
e

2. What is your nationality?

Vietnames
e

3. What is your occupation?

studen
t

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

Shy, honest,
punctual

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Totally
accurate

6. How would you describe Finns?

Friendly, quite, shy, honest, need long time to be close friends,
loyal

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

safe, low corruption,
cold

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Yes

9. How would you describe Finland?

peaceful, cold and inconvenient to commune during winter, non english speaking
country

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

saying describe Scandinavia countries that i like best: Fins design product, Sweds produce it, Dans market it and Nors buy

Respondent 17

1. Gender

Femal
e

2. What is your nationality?

czech

3. What is your occupation?

studen
t

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

I heared before I came to Finland that they are all shy, quiet, introvert, weird, drunks, blond and suicidal.

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Finns are not really shy especially after couple of beers. I have unfortunately heard about some who committed a suicide. Some are introvert some are extrovert. Weird fits as well - for ex. gothics we don't have almoast at all.

6. How would you describe Finns?

That they are honest, don't lie working hard, well educated. Can be really good friends but they need a longer time to become ones. Normally especially younger population don't start conversation with foreigners. It's easier become part of group of finnish boys than girls. Girls are sometimes too emancipated and feminists.

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

That here are too many forests and too many lakes. That half year is just dark.

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

I think they are quite accurate. Well dark is not half year but close that anyway.

9. How would you describe Finland?

Land of beautiful lakes and clean forests, too big land for not enough people. Unfortunately no real mountains.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

I am sorry but I haven't heared any. Only thing I have in mind are finnish drinking games.. We don't really have those.

Respondent 18

1. Gender

Female

e

2. What is your nationality?

Chinese

e

3. What is your occupation?

Student

t

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

Shy, no innovations, no

romantic

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

yes

6. How would you describe Finns?

Silent, no humor sense, women dominate society, men are kind shy. Hard appearance but sensitive inside.

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Cold weather and clean environment with small

population.

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Yes

s

9. How would you describe Finland?

Peacefully and good place to

live.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

no idea

Respondent 19

1. Gender

Female

e

2. What is your nationality?

Finnish

h

3. What is your occupation?

Human

resources

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

- introverts, non-verbal - warm heart, reliable, precise

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

-some parts yes, but individual differences matters most

6. How would you describe Finns?

Usually: reliable, precise (e.g. about timetables), polite, "short with words" but open up when others are extroverts. Depends a lot from which parts of Finland and what is socioeconomic status.

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Cold, far away, clean, summercottage, sauna, homeland of Nokia-gsm - usually not much information, if no personal contact. In Europe, more knowledge than stereotypes.

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Well, far away, clean and home for Nokia..

9. How would you describe Finland?

Precious/unique place, clean nature & environment, privacy, sea and forests available, sporty people

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

No

Response

Respondent 20

1. Gender

Female

e

2. What is your nationality?

British

h

3. What is your occupation?

Unemployed

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

They don't make small talk, they are comfortable with silence, they don't smile, they are unfriendly at first but once you have made friends they are fiercely loyal and very warm.

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Yes, pretty much.

6. How would you describe Finns?

See 4 ;) The not smiling, it's more about having faces which are largely expressionless. Some Finns I met were very "smiley", but generally speaking the faces around me were expressionless to the extent that on return to the UK I was shocked by how animated English faces are. The Finns really DO seem comfortable with silence, and not interested in small talk. (This is good!) All the Finns I met were quietly confident in themselves, they have a high level of self esteem. And they were all well educated, and bright. I noticed this particularly with all the women I met, I had never thought of the UK as being a sexist society but the Finnish women are very strong, and much more genuinely "equal" than UK women are. I would also describe Finns as having solid traditions and strong morals.

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Not so many.....that saunas are everywhere, that it's very cold, that it's largely covered in forest.

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Yes, of course!

9. How would you describe Finland?

A magical country that has true seasons, each one of them more breathtaking than the last. Where you can really enjoy nature at its best.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

No
Response

Respondent 21

1. Gender

Female

2. What is your nationality?

British

h

3. What is your occupation?

Docto

r

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

Finnish men described as being like a walnut - hard exterior but softer centre.

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

To an

extent!

6. How would you describe Finns?

Respectful, sincere. Limited superficial niceties!

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Lakes, trees and saunas. Don't know much else about it.

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Well there are a lot of lakes and trees! Sauna is a big part of the culture too. It's true that people often don't know much else about Finland. Often don't know about the achievements in technology e.g. surprised that Nokia is Finnish.

9. How would you describe Finland?

Well kept secret! People are genuine, interested, hard-working. Good for outdoor activities. Very civilised society (perhaps except for some heavy drinkers!)

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

Men drink a lot and don't talk much. Young people like heavy metal music. It's cold all the year round. People keep their heads down when walking to avoid eye contact.

Respondent 22

1. Gender

Mal

e

2. What is your nationality?

Britis

h

3. What is your occupation?

Postgraduate

student

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

Unfriendly

y

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

No

6. How would you describe Finns?

I like to be around Finns, they do not indulge in annoying pointless smalltalk; and they are not shy to have intelligent conversations. Once you get to know them they are warm and friendly.

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Bad food Cold

Expensive

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

The food is bad. It is cold in the Winter (but it's surprisingly warm in the Summer). The weather is actually very enjoyable, the snow is great!

9. How would you describe Finland?

A little gem of sanity that has not been spoiled by the free market culture prevalent in much of Europe.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

No

Response

Respondent 23

1. Gender

Male

e

2. What is your nationality?

Indian

n

3. What is your occupation?

Mechanical

engineer

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

hard to get in to the
friendship.

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

yes

6. How would you describe Finns?

Very much shy, honest, hard working, helpful and good friends once you are very close to them.

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Wonderful calm and quiet
contry

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

yes

9. How would you describe Finland?

Beaitiful contry in all seasons. Can have different experience in different season.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

No

Response

Respondent 24

1. Gender

Mal

e

2. What is your nationality?

Finnis

h

3. What is your occupation?

Lecture

r

4. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finns?

Quiet, serious, strange sense of humor,
blond

5. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Mostly

yes.

6. How would you describe Finns?

One of the last aboriginal tribes in Europe. Honest, hard-working and quiet (when sober) lacking self esteem and trust on themselves.

7. What kinds of stereotypes have you heard about Finland?

Cold, dark and beautiful country with short chilly summers and endless freezing winter.

8. In your opinion, are they accurate?

Mostly, yes they are.

9. How would you describe Finland?

Cold, dark and beautiful country with short chilly summers and freezing winter that lasts only three months nowadays.

10. Please share any stories or myths, or "sayings" that you have heard about Finns or Finland.

Finland is an origin of Vikings and therefore the Finns are fearsome and vagarious people. The Finns drink a lot, fight a lot and hate the russians and swedes.

Appendix 2. Feedback answers to Finnish version of Diversophy®

1. Do you feel that the content is accurate concerning aspects of Finnish culture? Use examples if you can.

A1: To some extent the content is accurate but not in all aspects. Some aspects of the card set question are just a general overview of Finnish people, otherwise, they each vary according to the situation. An example of the card set question was the question, about trying to use Finnish words whilst in a Finnish crowd, some Finnish people I have been around are not really comfortable and appreciative when you try to speak Finnish and they want to speak English to you instead.

A2: Most of the content reflects Finland and Finnish culture accurately although some of the content is seen differently especially between different generations.

A3: I believe that the questions can be helpful for a foreigner to “study” Finnish culture, but at the same time some of the questions are leading and others are highly dependable on the person or might have a few answers even though not mentioned in the answer.

A4: Maybe some aspects are a little too dramatic. But the content is accurate and as a Finn can relate to most topics.

A5: At first I want to say that I’m foreign and I have not so much experiences with the Finnish culture. (I’m still learning... 😊) But, all in all, I think you deal sometimes with stereotypes. Sometimes it is good to deal with them and sometimes not. In general I think that these aspects concern Finnish culture.

A6: The content was accurate concerning aspects of other cultures. I learned a lot of other countries like: The Netherlands, Germany, China... e.g. habits during family activities, routine of taking you’re flag out or singing the anthem. It’s quite funny that in some countries it’s so normal and in other’s it’s not. I just found it sad that there wasn’t a lot of Finnish people in my group, so that’s why I didn’t learn a lot of Finland.

A7: I think it is concerning aspects of culture very well, clearly, but maybe sometimes a more complex answer would be needed.

A8: So far as I can say this, I would say yes. Because we spoke about many stereotypes, for example the healthcare or the common new year’s food. But we also figured at that it also depends from the individual person. I know also Finnish people who don’t like winter sport or who not use the saunas. Maybe we can say that the game present the common Finn. But each culture has different behaviors in different areas/parts of the own country. But I can say that my experiences are agreeing with the game aspects.

A9: The questions are descriptive things for Finnish culture. Most of culture-based questions will help to know about Finnish culture.

A10: I think the content is pretty accurate. I have experienced some of the situations myself and by getting to know Finnish people I’ve seen that a lot of the statements are true. Finnish people are, like stated in the question, introvert and will not easily show

emotions. Also I have learned before equality in a Finnish company is really important, in these questions you could find this too. These questions are also very helpful for people who come to Finland for the first time. They can really learn a lot about the way Finnish people are and how the business world works here.

A11: Yes. Like the coffee-consumption-thing and ice hockey because people may not know that Finland is the biggest coffee consumption country in the world. Finns like coffee to their bone. And because of the cold weather, they like ice hockey more than any other sports. I didn't know that when I first came to Finland. I think others are the same as me.

A12: Yes, when Finns go out to dinner at a local restaurant, upon finishing the meal they pay and don't leave a tip. And an appropriate way to begin a business presentation is with a brief overview rather than a joke or showing expertise in a subject.

A13: The content is multisided. The cards were accurate, but the extent of this accuracy I cannot tell, but at least seem true on the surface (as far as I know and have experienced about Finland and Finns).

A14: I think these questions could be really helpful for people visiting Finland or doing business with Finns. It gives basic information about how things are in Finland. It's good to know that some things are common and how to behave in certain situations. It helps to understand Finns and their behavior. Also, it can stop you from unintentionally insulting someone or the need to deal with misunderstandings.

A15: The questions provided the well-defined aspects of Finnish culture which are required by foreigners for successful communications with Finns.

A16: Of the examples we heard, I believe they were accurate. They included a parking ticket scenario, sports culture habits (beating Sweden) and keeping names.

A17: Yes, Finns have festive food during the time like Christmas drinking/food.

A18: Yes from basic daily small stuff to explain behaviors of Finns.

A19: Yes. For example: drinking tea and coffee, not showing emotion, competitive with Sweden.

A20: Yes, I do. I have learned so little so far about Finnish culture and I could find many answers and say "Yes, Finns act really like that" so I think it covers most topics.

A21: Yes but I think it is in every cultures so also in Finnish culture. It is useful to know how people in Finland normally behave and react so you can understand them and understand what they mean.

A22: Yes because 2 Finns were in my group and each time they would get the right answer. It means this info was accurate and so could be useful for a non-Finn to learn the culture. They include many different situations (business, colleague relationships, everyday life...) therefore can definitely give a global idea of the Finnish culture. I really

enjoyed this game because now that, as a exchange student, I am getting used to the culture I can relate to these cases.

A23: I don't think it is focusing only on Finnish culture because it can be useful for other nationalities. Every country has different answers, and you can discover a lot about different people according to their home country.

A24: Yes, it is quite accurate i.e. we have been discussing for a long time and often Finnish people agreed on that.

A25: Yes it is. There are a lot of specific and different questions about Finland, the people, their behavior, their manners, cultural stuff and so on. I think it is a good game for foreign people. There are a lot of funny questions in it. But the answer is sometimes difficult (if this is a Choice question). So the group sometimes didn't agree with the answer on the backside.

A26: Some things need to be accepted even if you don't agree. I think that when you are doing business in a different country you should accept the rules of the game of that country even if you don't agree...kind of respect.

A27: I think Finland starts to concentrate move on service culture and customer satisfaction (so there won't be any hard edges about this cooperation with US companies). I have the experience since I am studying services in JAMK. Other situations were rather familiar to me, so I could easily recognize Finnish typical behavior.

A28: I think the content of the questions represents Finnish culture and Finnish social area like being silent or acting rationally and courage is important in Finnish culture. This is new to learn for someone who is unfamiliar with Finnish culture.

2. Do you believe that the content would be useful as a means of introduction to Finnish business and life? Please explain why or why not.

A1: The information would definitely be useful to foreign business men trying to carry out business with Finns. But the content should not be taken as Gospel. Finnish people can be surprisingly different, so it's better to first understand the people who you are dealing with and not stereotype.

A2: The content can give you some sort of direction into the Finnish culture but is no replacement to real life experiences.

A3: Yes as it gives a basic idea of the Finnish mindset (at least if playing with a Finn). No as it deals with stereotypes.

A4: Yes the material could be used to introduce Finnish business and life, but it would be good to have a Finn to clarify the points or expand the explanations to clarify the points more.

A5: I think it is useful because you can learn more about Finland but also about other cultures. In business life it can help break the ice and to start easier at the business in or with Finland.

A6: I don't think it is that handy to have this if you want to do business with Finns. But of course the general idea/perception you now have (after playing the game) is good. In general, it's always good to have some more information about a country.

A7: I think it can be very useful for people that have never experienced Finnish culture. Some things as jokes and proverbs are the most descriptive.

A8: I think it's a good way to get to know this culture. And it's a beginning of this knowledge about a Finn. But I always would say that's most important to speak with some Finnish people and figure out what is true because it often depends from the individual person. Not all Finns like to go into the sauna.

A9: Yes the cards are useful content for introduction to Finnish business. In some cases people do not know how to behave. These things will help with this.

A10: Yes, it could be really helpful for the people who will start living here or people who get in contact with them in the business world. This can make negotiations for example much easier.

A11: Yes, I think it is really useful if there are more examples about everyone's daily life in Finland. People get more from daily experience, life details, so I think it is useful that just getting from a lonely planet book. I really do hope that there are enough examples in the database that can explain more details.

A12: I believe so. The content will help people avoid many inappropriate behavior and embarrassment on condition that people don't know people here usually do. It will abate much misunderstanding which will impact on how people judge somebody else. Eliminating illusion is quite important to learning about business and culture in another country.

A13: I think it is a good way to take the first steps into the Finnish culture, especially through the little "humorous" touch of some questions. I wish I was told this when I got to Finland so I didn't let 3 buses pass by me and didn't stop for me. The information is useful as small things like greetings and small talk that not exist creates the first impression and start a new business/life contact/relation.

A14: The information about work situations, how to talk to your colleagues is helpful. You know generally that they mean what they say so you don't have to look for any hidden meanings.

A15: The majority of facts were familiar for me due to my third year in Finland. I have noticed that some exchange students gave wrong answers because they didn't have enough time to understand the culture and behavior. Anyway, these questions were significantly useful.

A16: I think much of the content can be useful to help people understand Finnish business culture.

A17: Yes. It's basic information to help understand their culture easily.

A18: Yes, very useful.

A19: It's useful for life aspects but not so much for business.

A20: Yes, very useful and fun to play. I think I got the most out of discussing questions where we had to really think about how it is different from our country.

A21: Yes, especially in Finnish life but maybe because we didn't have any cards about Finnish business. In my opinion you should create more business situations.

A22: See question 1.

A23: Yes it would be useful because thanks to the questions you can learn a lot about Finns behavior and also way of thinking. Then you can adapt easier or at least you can be less surprised during the next business meeting for example.

A24: It's still a start and can explain details that would take a long time to learn on your own.

A25: As I wrote in point 1, yes I think it is good. To get an overview of the behavior, manners and interesting stuff in these cases.

A26: Yes, it would be useful as a means of introduction to Finnish business and life: by considering examples (cards) we learn more about Finnish culture and the way they are doing business (for example, the most significant point is the perfect quality of products instead of providing excellent customer service (US) and Finnish culture: If you meet a person and ask him/her "How are you?" he/she can answer how it's really going on: Finnish people prefer honesty in answers).

A27: The dining culture in Finland can seem rather strange for foreigners, so people have to be prepared to split the bill in a restaurant. I found situations rather useful: about introvert character of these people, principles of friendship and "sisu", routine day-to-day small things to consider.

A28: I think this content is useful to understand the entrepreneurs' knowledge about Finland. Before introducing the business, it is useful to learn about the market. The content shows that taking risks is encouraged and in some cultures it is not true so this is a good example to show the business culture of Finland. Generally in Europe, people tend to retire later but in Finland people generally retire earlier and this is very important issue in business world.