

# ANSWERS

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.3—What is Culture? The Iceberg: Suggested answers

The following items are in the visible part of the iceberg:

1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 11, 15, 16, 21, and 22.

These items are in the invisible part:

2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, and 25.

### 1.5—Linking Values to Behaviors: Suggested answers

1. Directness—Disagreeing openly with someone at a meeting
2. Centrality of family—Taking off from work to attend the funeral of an aunt
3. External Control—Accepting, without question, that something can't be changed
4. Saving face—At a meeting, agreeing with a suggestion you think is wrong
5. Respect for age—Not laying off an older worker whose performance is weak
6. Informality—Asking people to call you by your first name
7. Deference to authority—Asking the headmaster's opinion about something you're the expert on
8. Indirectness—Use of understatement
9. Self-reliance—Not helping the person next to you on an exam
10. Egalitarianism—Inviting the teaboy to eat lunch with you in your office

### 1.6—Universal/Cultural/Personal: Suggested Answers

Universal behaviors: 2, 8, 12, 13

Cultural behaviors: 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 14

Personal behaviors: 1, 6, 7, 15

### 1.10—Defining Culture: List of characteristics of culture

1. culture is collective, shared by a group
2. culture is learned
3. it has to do with values, beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, and feelings
4. it involves customs and traditions
5. it influences or guides behavior



6. it is transmitted from generation to generation
7. it is unconscious or implicit
8. it is a response/adaptation to reality

## FUNDAMENTALS OF CULTURE I

### I.1—Sharing the Rewards: Answer and Discussion

Person A: \$5000  
 Person B: \$5000  
 Person C: \$5000  
 Person D: \$5000



People in collectivist cultures seek the good of the group over the good of themselves, not because they are indifferent to their own welfare, but because they feel the surest way to guarantee personal survival is to make sure the group thrives and prospers. Hence, it would be more important and comforting to me for everyone in my group to benefit as much as possible from this bonus, getting the maximum each person could get (\$5000), than for me personally to get more because I happened to do more work. If the person who was only able to do 10% of the work (not that we would even bother to make these calculations, mind you) only got \$2000, I would worry about that person's financial well being. If that person suffers from financial need, then his/her performance at work might slip, and then we would *all* be in trouble.

### I.2—The Concept of Self: Suggested Answers

These behaviors are *more* commonly associated with individualism:

- 2—a cocktail party means, generally, superficial contact with a lot of people; collectivists associate intensely with a few people
- 4—singles out an individual
- 6—rewards based on what you do, not who you are (which is more collectivist)
- 7—contracts keep people honest; collectivists know people will be honest (or they get booted out of the group)
- 8—individuals need their independence
- 9—because there is no loyalty to the organization (the collective)
- 10—collectivists shun conflict because it could damage harmony
- 12—long-term relationships tie the individual down; also individualists move a lot, are less loyal to place
- 13—collectivists prefer self-effacement
- 15—fostering independence and taking responsibility for self
- 16—instead of “other-help” books
- 20—collectivists would provide for everyone, and then expect to be provided for in turn later on

These behaviors are more commonly associated with collectivism:

- 1—giving *your* name would be more individualist
- 3—within a group, collectivists stick together; *vis a vis* other groups, they can be very competitive
- 5—in the sense that older, senior people are listened to, and they tend to be more traditional
- 11—people are defined by what they belong to
- 14—saving face maintains harmony, the glue that keeps the group together
- 17—so no one feels left out (as opposed to majority rules, which leaves the minority out)
- 18—the need to be more specific about relationships is more important to collectivists
- 19—these keep the group, your family, happy (which in turn keeps you happy)

### I.3—Score Yourself: Individualism or Collectivism: Results

The following choices tend to be more characteristic of individualists:

1b, 2b, 3a, 4a, 5b, 6b, 7b, 8a, 9a, 10b

These choices tend to be more characteristic of collectivists:

1a, 2a, 3b, 4b, 5a, 6a, 7a, 8b, 9b, 10a

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.2—The Things We Say: Suggested Answers

- 1-3: Americans value action and doing over talking, especially if it's talking *instead of* action.
- 4-6: Directness.
- 7-8: Emphasis on accomplishment, achieving things, in addition to being a good person.
- 9-11: Optimism.
- 12: Self-determination, control over one's destiny
- 13: Self-reliance, independence.
- 14-15: Don't judge or be fooled by appearances; look beneath the surface.
- 16: Risk taking, experimentation.

### 2.4—Thinking About My Job: Brief notes

For each incident, here are some things you might have thought about or considered.

1. **Attitude Towards Age**—You will need to establish your credibility with some results that can't be refuted. Or you can ally yourself with someone in the village who does have credibility and who can vouch

for you. You should also be patient; give people time to feel comfortable with you and to see that you aren't leaving tomorrow or next week.

2. **Attitude Towards Change**—Faster and efficient doesn't mean much if these teachers have to learn a whole new way of doing something, especially if they aren't even good at it. Your best chance is probably to give some kind of demonstration and let the technique itself, not your characterization of it, win them over. Or sell someone the teachers look up to on the merits of the technique.
3. **Concept of Equality**—Unless you can enlist other backers for your plan, you should probably drop it. Do you even know if the teaboy would want to be inside? After all, he has survived like this for many years, after all.
4. **Attitude Towards Taking Risks**—Can you try this on a small scale first, so there isn't so much at stake? Is it worth risking your relationship with this man just for the sake of your experiment? Think this through, for your sake and the village's.
5. **View of the Natural World**—The students are obviously used to being taught without books (for a few weeks, anyway). Can't you somehow manage? Will anyone back you in your scheme? What would the price of victory be?

#### 2.5—Sources of American Culture: Suggested Answers

- A. Protestantism: 7, 11, 13, 18
- B. American Geography: 1, 3, 4, 9, 14, 19, 21
- C. Escape from Repression: 2, 5, 6, 10, 12, 15, 16, 22, 23
- D. Nature of the Immigrant: 8, 17, 20, 24

*Note: Nos. 2, 9, and 18 might also go under D.*

#### 2.6—How Non-Americans See Americans: Results

- Qualities most associated, in rank order:
1. Energetic
  2. Industrious
  3. Inventive
  4. Friendly
- Qualities least associated, in rank order:
1. Lazy
  2. Sexy
  3. Honest
  4. Sophisticated

#### 2.8—Now What? Brief notes

1. **Come With Us**—Ask him how important his religion is to him. When he says "very," tell him you feel the same way about yours. Maybe ask him if he would come to your church if he were in your country. Keep

making excuses; the issue might go away. Or compromise and say you aren't able to go to a service but you would like to hear more about his religion.

2. **Aren't You Normal?**—This is very personal, but you will have to weigh the costs of coming out in such a place against those of not coming out. Your best move here is to find another gay PCV and ask him how he has dealt with this. You need advice. Meanwhile, if you want to buy time, you can try to ignore the question.
3. **Native Speaker**—You can try explaining that Americans have very different backgrounds. You may be able to have some other credible native speaker vouch for you. Are there host country native speakers whose families came from elsewhere that you can compare yourself to?
4. **Help**—As a blind person, you have probably encountered this syndrome even in the U.S. Try doing what you have done before. You might also try to explain the cultural difference here, that in the U.S. blind people are often fully functioning members of society and you, as a result, don't know how to handle all the "wonderful" help you are being offered. You can also try saying that you don't want to be a burden on people.
5. **Doubt**—You may have to inform these students in the ways of America. Is there a minority group in the host country that you could compare Blacks in America to, a group that achieves as well as the majority culture?
6. **Manual Labor**—Can you work through an intermediary? You stay on the ground giving explicit instructions while he climbs up and demonstrates? Can you stand nearby so that the workers can easily come to you for instruction?

#### 2.9—Diversity Lessons: Suggested List

1. You are not as relaxed.
2. You listen more and talk less.
3. You may outwardly agree with things you would normally not agree with, because you are the only one who seems to think differently.
4. You refrain from telling certain of your standard stories.
5. In general, you monitor what you say very closely.
6. You are much more alert to feedback, to how people are reacting to you.
7. You observe more closely than you normally do.
8. You don't assume most people agree with you.
9. You don't assume most people understand you.
10. You assume you are being watched and listened to more closely than normal.
11. You don't trust your instincts as much as you normally do.



## FUNDAMENTALS OF CULTURE II

### II.1—An Accident: Discussion

There could be many explanations for the gap here, but one of them almost certainly is the difference between being a universalist (many Americans) and a particularist (many Venezuelans). Universalists tend to feel that right is right, regardless of circumstances, while particularists tend to feel you always have to take circumstances (the person in trouble here is your friend) into account. This section of the workbook will explore these differences in greater detail.

### II.2—Personal and Societal Obligations: Suggested Answers

In the first set, #3. is particularist; the other three are universalist because:

- 1—particularists would say personal feelings would have to be taken into account
- 2—deals change when circumstances change for particularists
- 4—for particularists, the law depends on who you are, etc.

In the second set, #1 is universalist; the other three are particularist because:

- 2—this is particularist dogma
- 3—particularists are subjective; universalists are objective
- 4—universalist logic is of the head

In the third set, #1 is particularist; the other three are universalist because:

- 2—particularists avoid consistency because things are relative
- 3—particularist logic is of the heart
- 4—particularists live by exceptions; there are no absolutes

In the fourth set, #2 is universalist; the other three are particularist because:

- 1—because friends can always be trusted (and you don't do business with strangers anyway)
- 3—particularist logic says the bond is more important than the facts of the case
- 4—collectivists have the same in-group/out-group mentality as particularists do

In the fifth set, #4 is universalist; the other three are particularist because:

- 1—this is particularist dogma, no absolutes
- 2—particularists always take circumstances into account
- 3—relationships, the personal side of things, are more important than cost, etc.

### II.3—Score Yourself: Universalism or Particularism: Results

The following behaviors tend to be more characteristic of universalists:

1a, 2a, 3b, 4b, 5a, 6a, 7a, 8b, 9b, 10b

These behaviors tend to be more characteristic of particularists:

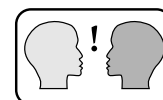
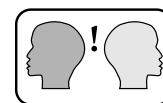
1b, 2b, 3a, 4a, 5b, 6b, 7b, 8a, 9a, 10a

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.2—Styles of Communication: Indirect and Direct: Suggested Answers

The following behaviors are commonly associated with high context cultures:

- 1—high context people have that kind of instinctive understanding common with twins
- 2—a refusal threatens harmony, which is key in high context cultures
- 3—what’s in the lines is whatever saves face, so the message is between the lines
- 4—third party communication avoids direct confrontation
- 5—understatement is more indirect
- 9—where it’s difficult to say no, yes has less meaning
- 12—relationships are more important in high context cultures, and small talk cements relationships
- 14—the message is often not in the words in high context cultures, so look for it in something else
- 17—close-knit networks are common in more collectivist, high context cultures
- 18—the message is not in the words, so it may be in something else
- 20—so you won’t be upset



The following behaviors are commonly associated with low context cultures:

- 6—directness is preferred
- 7—to disagree is common in low context cultures, where one speaks one’s mind, no matter whom one is speaking to
- 8—words are taken more literally
- 10—acquaintances have to spell things out because they do not instinctively understand each other
- 11—because the meaning is in the words
- 13—the task is more important in low context cultures
- 15—there is rarely any message in the context in low context cultures
- 16—because networks are less common

19—the words will carry the meaning, not the context: Possible perceptions

### 3.4—Culture and Communication Styles: Possible perceptions

1. Direct: Americans (on the left side of the continuum) are sometimes seen as blunt and insensitive by HCNs on the left.
2. Low Context: Americans (left side) just don't pick up on any of our cues. You have to spell everything out for them.
3. Face Less Important: Americans (left side) tend to say whatever comes into their head, no matter the situation nor to whom they are talking.
4. The Task: Americans (left side) think you can separate the doer from the deed. You can't get anything done by focusing exclusively on the what; you also have to focus on the who and the how.

### 3.6—Dialogues: Analysis

In reading these analyses, assume for the sake of the exercise that culture was in fact at the heart of the misunderstanding. These kinds of misunderstandings *can* occur between people from the same culture, of course, but *every* misunderstanding that occurs between people from two different cultures is not caused by a cultural difference, but it is always a *possible* cause and should never be dismissed.

#### 1. Quick Trip

Reading between the lines here, it appears the co-op was “interviewing” the PCV for some kind of expertise he might be able to provide. It sounds like the customary procedure at the co-op is to give people a tour that goes on for at least two hours. If this is a high context culture, then this departure from the norm (a norm the PCV would be expected to know) *may* be a way of sending a signal, which is why the HCN has picked up on this point. The HCN's suspicions only increase when she hears that the people at the co-op scheduled the visit of another expert on the heels of the PCV *and volunteered this information to the PCV*. Again, this *could* mean the people at the co-op want the PCV to know that other candidates are being considered, which in turn *could be* their way of politely indicating he does not have the assignment.

#### 2. Committee Meeting

The mistake here is assuming that if people have a problem with a proposal at a meeting, they'll tell you, even in front of other people. While this may be characteristic behavior in direct, low context cultures, it is less common in indirect cultures. Indirect communicators, worried about face saving and wanting to preserve harmony, usually try to avoid public confrontation. They will avoid discussing a matter rather than clash over it in public (which may be why there was no discussion here) and even say “fine” when things aren't fine. The PCV makes the mistake of assuming that no comment means approval, as it often does in the United States, and that a person who says “fine” is pleased. But the worse error here (worse than these misinterpretations) may be bringing up a potentially controversial topic in a public forum like this, especially if this is the first time the subject has been raised.



### 3. We'll Get Back To You

Remember that in high context cultures the message is often not found in what people say or do but in what they fail to say or do. In this dialogue, it may be significant that the director did not meet with the PCV as originally planned but instead sent his assistant. And it may be of further significance that the assistant asked few questions and scheduled no subsequent appointment. In other words, no one is going to specifically tell the PCV that there is no interest in her proposal—that could cause an embarrassing loss of face—but the message is nevertheless going to be communicated.

The other possibility, of course, is that there is a perfectly innocent explanation for all this: the director was unavoidably detained at the last minute; the assistant had few questions because she knew the proposal very well; and no new meeting date was set because the assistant simply forgot! The point is that in some cases in some cultures, you may need to read more into the nonverbal communication.

### 4. Explanations

Miss Chung is trying to save the PCV's face here. After all, if Miss Chung says she doesn't understand the explanation, then the PCV might feel badly that he didn't give a very clear explanation, which the PCV might find embarrassing. Moreover, Miss Chung expects that the PCV will understand that her "yes" may only be for politeness sake. At least this is how it would work in Miss Chung's culture, where one has to be careful not to embarrass an expert. But in more direct cultures, "yes" has a tendency to mean yes (not "I'm being polite"), and no one is upset if another person doesn't understand the explanation. Typically, there is less face for the losing and saving in direct cultures than in indirect ones.

### 5. Transfer

There's a good chance the PCV has misread this exchange and is not being transferred. On the surface—which one learns to be wary of in indirect/high context cultures—the director has been sympathetic and understanding, but she does not appear at any point to have specifically said she will transfer the PCV. That in itself is meaningful. All she *has* said is that she knows Radu is a boor and that she's had a lot of complaints about him. If the PCV sees a transfer in those words, that's his prerogative, but remember that in indirect cultures people often go to great lengths to avoid using the word no, to avoid a scene, and will happily say yes whenever the opportunity presents itself—and even, on occasion, when it doesn't.

### 3.8—Practicing Indirectness: Suggestions

1. *Do you think that's a good idea?*  
*Are there any other ideas?*  
*I like most parts of that idea.*
2. *That's an interesting point.*  
*That's another good point.*

3. *I have one possible suggestion.*  
*What do you think of this idea?*
4. *Does anyone else have any suggestions?*  
*Have we heard all the opinions?*
5. *I have some other figures here.*  
*Those figures may be slightly old.*
6. *I would do that like this.*  
*Have you tried doing that this way?*
7. *I have another idea.*  
*What do you think of this idea?*  
*May I make a suggestion?*

**3.9—Decoding Indirectness: Suggestions**

1. *That is a very interesting viewpoint.*  
*I don't agree.*  
*We need to talk more about this.*  
*You're wrong.*
2. *This proposal deserves further consideration.*  
*We don't like it.*  
*It needs work.*  
*Propose something else.*
3. *I know very little about this, but...*  
*I'm something of an expert on this but am too polite to say so.*  
*What I think we should do is...*
4. *We understand your proposal very well.*  
*Do you have another one?*  
*We don't like it.*
5. *We will try our best.*  
*Don't expect much to happen.*
6. *I heard another story about that project.*  
*I don't agree with what you said about that project.*
7. *Can we move on to the next topic?*  
*We don't want to talk about this now.*  
*We need to consult with people not in the room before we can decide.*

**3.10—Harmony and Face: Brief notes**

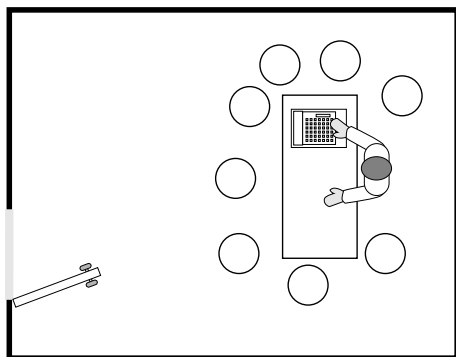
1. **Crop Failure**—Heap praise upon his scheme and then delicately point out how one or two tiny parts of it (the core) might not work. Or let

him know your opinion through an intermediary so he doesn't get embarrassed in front of you.

2. **End Run**—Is the pace of your project truly unbearable? Is it going nowhere or going somewhere with exquisite (and excruciating) slowness? Would patience help? What about explaining the situation to an HCN colleague and getting advice? Are you sure you know how the division manager would react if you went around the supervisor?
3. **Moving Up**—How much does it matter? Will things go to hell in a handbasket if this person is promoted? Can you plead ignorance? Will it cost you anything to be honest?
4. **Electronic Mail**—Don't forget that your boss may also know the facts here. Mention how good the company it is in *other* ways, and then ask whether your boss knows if this company has any experience in this area. Talk around the point, without leaving any doubt where you stand (or any fingerprints on the gun).
5. **Tight Spot**—This is messy. Pleading ignorance is probably a good bet here.

### FUNDAMENTALS OF CULTURE III

#### III.1—Service With a Smile: Drawing



#### III.2—The Concept of Time: Monochronic & Polychronic: Suggested Answers

These behaviors are more commonly associated with the monochronic world view:

- 1—time is just time for polychronic types
- 2—being on time is important for monochronic types
- 3—monochronic time depends on schedules
- 4—monochronic time thinks less about people, more about goals
- 7—changes in plans upset monochronic people who live by their plans



8—because it takes other people into account less than polychronic time

15—because being late is rude in monochronic time

17—because they upset the schedule

18—being waited on one at a time is monochronic behavior

These behaviors are more commonly associated with the polychronic world view:

5—waiting isn't bad in cultures where being on time is less important

6—upsetting schedules doesn't matter where schedules aren't that important anyway

9—people count more in polychronic time

10—in that collectivists are more attuned to needs of others, as are polychronic types

11—being on time (adhering to deadline) not as crucial in polychronic world

12—late matters less where time matters less

13—polychronic types are more in touch with the person than monochronic types

14—polychronic types can change plans more easily because they are less in the grip of schedules

16—there is always enough time in polychronic world

### III.3—Score Yourself: Monochronic and Polychronic: Results

The following behaviors tend to be more characteristic of monochronic people:

1a, 2b, 3a, 4b, 5a, 6a, 7b, 8a, 9b, 10b

The following behaviors tend to be more characteristic of polychronic people:

1b, 2a, 3b, 4a, 5b, 6b, 7a, 8b, 9a, 10a

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.2-The Concept of Power: Suggested Answers

These behaviors are more commonly associated with high power distance cultures:

1—there is more fear of displeasing the boss in high power distance cultures

2—emphasizing distinctions between boss and subordinates is the norm

5—rank has its privileges in these cultures

- 7—again, to emphasize the distance
- 8—close supervision, the visible exercise of power, is common to these cultures
- 11—the unequal distribution of power
- 12—independence is not valued in subordinates
- 14—to keep those with and without power separated
- 15—rank must be respected; you should not go around people
- 16—there is a need to show who has power over whom
- 17—bosses are supposed to wield their power
- 19—to emphasize the power gap

These behaviors are more commonly associated with low power distance cultures:

- 3—because superiors do not have to be deferred to
- 4—no one is threatened by independence or thinking for oneself
- 6—power differences are not emphasized
- 9—because the distance is minimized
- 10—we're all equal here so we all depend on each other
- 13—because he's just another worker here
- 18—because we are all in this together, power distance is de-emphasized

#### 4.4—Dialogues: Analysis

In reading these analyses, assume for the sake of the exercise that culture was in fact at the heart of the misunderstanding. These kinds of misunderstandings *can* occur between people from the same culture, of course, but *every* misunderstanding that occurs between people from two different cultures is not caused by a cultural difference, but it is always a *possible* cause and should never be dismissed out of hand.

##### 1. Bosses Have Their Reasons

In many high power distance cultures, bosses are not used to having their decisions questioned or, worse, having to explain them to subordinates. In such cultures, bosses make decisions, and subordinates carry them out. And if there *are* questions, they would normally be raised in a most delicate manner and always through the proper channels. The HCN has been trying to suggest all this to the PCV (“She must have her reasons.” “She’s the boss.”), but the Volunteer hasn’t been listening. This doesn’t mean bosses are unapproachable or infallible, but you do have to think long and hard before challenging those in power, and to then do so in the appropriate way.

##### 2. A Surprise for the Chief

Chances are Mr. Plonc isn’t going to be pleased. In many American workplaces, employees are rewarded and praised for taking the initiative,

for seeing something that needs to be done and just doing it, without waiting to be told. In high power distance cultures, that kind of behavior is often interpreted as taking power that hasn't been given to you. You have made a decision that wasn't yours to make, and in the process usurped and threatened the authority of the person who is *supposed* to make such a decision. In cultures where power is highly centralized and closely guarded, taking initiative is a risky business.

### 3. The Golden Spoon

In high power distance cultures, interaction between the higher ranks and the lower ranks, any mixing of the ranks, is relatively uncommon and tends to be quite formal. Provincial representatives don't just have lunch with the little guys on the spur of the moment; most people would feel quite uncomfortable and awkward. In these cultures, people of higher status tend not to regard themselves as being like workers, nor do they want to be seen that way. The greater the gulf between the higher ranks and the lower echelons, the better for everyone. A casual lunch invitation, as suggested by the PCV in this dialogue, would not be the norm, and if the representative accepted, the supervisors he would normally lunch with might take it as a deliberate slight.

### 4. A Lesson

The person learning the lesson here may turn out to be the PCV, not Mr. Biswas. The PCV is apparently planning to take an important matter directly to the dean, without informing Mr. Biswas. In many cultures, this bypassing of the chain of command will not be appreciated. Indeed, the first question from the dean to the PCV is likely to be: "Did you discuss this with Mr. Biswas?"

Even if Mr. Biswas is as ineffective as everyone claims, that doesn't mean it's acceptable to go around him. The proper thing would be for the PCV to engage Biswas on the matter, see if he responds, and if he doesn't, then either announce that he's going to the dean or ask Biswas to do so. If Biswas still does nothing, then the PCV can go to the dean with relative impunity, having gone through the proper channels.

#### 4.5-Attitude Toward Uncertainty: Suggested Answers

These behaviors are more commonly associated with high uncertainty avoidance cultures:

- 1—because sticking to the structure, the schedule, is comforting
- 2—when people lose control of emotions, anything can happen!
- 3—because it is unpredictable or unknown
- 5—being formal assures a certain order in the unfolding of interactions
- 9—going around the structure threatens it's very survival, and where would we be without structure?
- 11—these cultures are comforted by expertise, and that is gained by long study; the common person couldn't know that much
- 12—conflict threatens the smooth running of things

- 14—stability is sought and provided for; change is threatening
- 15—because of the fear of the unknown
- 17—authority guarantees order and keeps things under control
- 19—rules are the foundation of order
- 21—risks are inherently unsettling because they involve the unknown

These behaviors are more commonly associated with low uncertainty avoidance cultures:

- 4—change is not so frightening
- 6—differing views are nothing to be afraid of; nothing is set in stone
- 7—you can't know or control the future anyway
- 8—there's nothing to fear from emotions
- 10—order doesn't break down or get undermined that easily
- 13—the unknown is not frightening
- 16—there isn't that much fear and what can't be understood or controlled
- 18—control is not that comforting
- 20—rules can be limiting; there's nothing inherently satisfying about rules
- 22—since the unknown isn't particularly worrying, risks are not to be feared

#### 4.6—Dialogues: Analysis

In reading these analyses, assume for the sake of the exercise that culture was in fact at the heart of the misunderstanding. These kinds of misunderstandings *can* occur between people from the same culture, of course, nor is every misunderstanding that occurs between people from two different cultures caused by a cultural difference, but it is always a *possible* cause and should never be dismissed out of hand.

##### 1. About Manuel

On the whole, people in high uncertainty avoidance cultures try to steer clear of confrontation and conflict. They believe that conflict is potentially destabilizing, that unless people keep their feelings in check, things can get dangerously out of hand. Thus, Manuel will probably not confront his boss, though at some later point, when he has calmed down, they may have a civilized conversation about the matter. The PCV's notion that getting things off your chest is better than seething may not fit this culture.

##### 2. In Over His Head

People in high uncertainty avoidance cultures like certainties, and in this regard nothing comforts quite so much as an expert. One can rely on experts, comforted by their command of their field; they can tell you what's going to happen and what to do about it. Or, if they can't quite do

that, they can at least help you devise strategies and responses to handle whatever might happen. In this kind of world, experts do not like to admit mistakes and let down those who depend on them (nor do those people like to be disappointed in this regard). So the expert from the capital, whatever else he may do, is not going to admit he made a mistake. He will probably announce one day that we are going to try something new—and that will be that.

### 3. Regulations

Laws, policies, regulations and procedures are a great comfort to people who are frightened by uncertainty, for the simple reason that they prescribe—or at least attempt to prescribe—human behavior. If you have laws, you don't have to worry about how people are going to behave; you *know* how they're going to behave. And that makes life infinitely more certain and predictable. In such societies, ignoring or circumventing the law is a serious matter. If a law makes no sense, as it sometimes does in unusual circumstances, then make a new one to fit those circumstances. But whatever you do, don't break the original law.

### 4. Backlog

Another characteristic of uncertainty avoiding cultures is fear of the new and of change. What's new or different is inherently risky, and risk is uncertainty personified. Note the hesitation of the HCN in this dialogue, trying to find out if this new software has ever been tried in "organizations like ours." If it has, then the risk is less and therefore more palatable. But it has only been tried in America, which isn't much comfort. Another problem, of course, is that everyone will have to be trained in the software, a further complication in a culture which likes the status quo. All together, it would be better to wait until next summer and resubmit the request. Getting rid of the backlog just isn't worth the risk of all this experimentation.



#### 4.8—The Source of Status: Brief notes

1. **Upstanding Students**—Is this behavior really worth resisting? Pick your battles carefully when you are a PCV.
2. **Respect**—This does not seem a stand worth taking. Weigh how much it will cost you to continue confusing workers (who are not from an egalitarian culture like yours) against whatever personal satisfaction you may derive from just being yourself.
3. **In the Matter of Mr. Kodo**—With luck you can sidestep this issue and say that as an outsider you do not want to get involved. Or you can say that you are sympathetic to Mr. Kodo but do not feel that a public campaign is the right way to resolve such issues. If you would like to go further and declare your position on the matter, in favor of the choice that was made, then you might couch it in cultural terms and say that Americans take more than loyalty and longevity into account in making such decisions. Whatever you do, there is nothing to be lost for expressing your sympathy for Mr. Kodo.



4. **Considering the Source**—Depending on the country here, you may be stuck. If your boss is not into raising awareness, and he's right about the attitudes of the delegation, you risk achieving the ends you want (policy changes) by objecting to the means.

#### 4.9—Workplace Values and Norms: Possible perceptions

The mark indicating the American position is normally on the left side on all of these continuums.

1. Power distance: HCNs might think Americans don't respect bosses very much. Or that bosses are entirely too chummy with subordinates.
2. Uncertainty avoidance: Americans take too many risks and don't respect traditions enough.
3. Source of status: Achievements matter too much to Americans. They don't believe in the wisdom of experience or the significance of one's social class and upbringing.
4. Concept of work: Americans can't enjoy life because work and success matter too much to them.
5. Personal/professional: Americans try to separate life into artificial boxes. It's not as black and white as they think. Life is gray.
6. Motivation: Americans think too much about the professional side of work and life; they should worry more about the human side. They want to get ahead, but for what? We all die, even those who are ahead.
7. Key to productivity: Americans are too fixated on output and results, the what; they aren't concerned enough about the how. They don't realize the how affects the what.
8. Ideal worker: Anybody can have skills (or get them); what matters is personal qualities. Americans focus on the superficial, what the person can do; they should focus on the substance, on who the person is.

#### 4.11—You Americans: Notes

These are some suggestions as to why Americans come across the way they do to HCNs:

1. Why are you Americans always in such a hurry to get things done?  
We often seem this way because of our tendency to use achievements and accomplishments as a measure of a person's worth. We're in a hurry to get things done because it's only then that we feel we have proved our worth.
2. Why do you Americans insist on treating everyone the same?  
We do this because of a deep cultural instinct toward egalitarianism, which was a reaction to the class system and, before that, the feudal system that existed in Europe. In cultures where inequality is more accepted, our insistence on egalitarianism may be grating.

3. Why do you Americans always have to say what you're thinking?  
We believe that being direct is the most efficient way to communicate. And being more efficient means you get more done.
4. Why do you Americans always want to change things?  
We think things can always be better, that progress is inevitable. Older cultures are more skeptical because they have been around longer and seen more.
5. Why don't you Americans show more respect for your seniors and elders?  
We respect results, not age or authority. Therefore, unless an elder or a senior also happens to be a superior achiever, there is no automatic respect.
6. Why do you Americans always think things are going to get better?  
We are optimists because we believe the locus of control is in ourselves. Therefore, the only obstacle to things getting better is a personal lack of will or effort, which is eminently fixable.
7. Why are you Americans so concerned about individual recognition?  
Individualism is ingrained in us. Not being used to working together that much, we don't trust team or group recognition.
8. Why are you Americans so impatient?  
If things take a long time to do, we can do fewer of them. And when you're counting achievements, more is better.

#### 4.13—Turning the Tables

1. Keep working at the language. Your efforts alone will impress people, and the advances you make will impress them even more.
2. Try your hand at some small task you *know* you will succeed at. This will establish your basic competence and improve your standing.
3. Do *not* take on anything ambitious or high profile, until you are very sure of yourself. An early failure can leave a lasting impression.
4. Listen. Listen. And then listen further. If you listen to people, they'll know you know something—because they told you.
5. Spend time with colleagues and coworkers, on and off the job. As people see you interacting with others—and with them—they'll assume you are learning things about their culture, etc. On the other hand, if you hang around with the other PCV in town and go away on the weekends, they'll assume you're not learning very much.
6. Ask questions, all the time, of everyone. People will be impressed that you are asking. And besides, you need to learn as much as you can, and then let people know you have learned.
7. Work with someone who *is* credible. People may not entrust you with responsibilities on your own, but they may entrust you and your host country partner with important work.

8. Try to exhibit as much cultural sensitivity as possible. Nothing hurts your credibility quite so much as stories about the faux pas you have made. And nothing helps it as much as stories about your sensitivity.
9. Be patient. The sheer passing of time will work to your advantage; people will get used to your being around and see you less and less as an outsider.

## **FUNDAMENTALS OF CULTURE IV**

### **IV.1—Who’s In Charge Here? Discussion**

There could be many explanations, but one almost certainly is the fact that many Americans believe in the power of the individual to prevail against all obstacles, that there is nothing people cannot do or become if they want it badly enough and are willing to make the effort. This notion is best exemplified in the classic American expression: “Where there is a will there is a way.”

In Chinese culture, many people believe that while you can shape your life to some extent, certain external forces, things beyond your control, also play an important part. What happens to you in life is not entirely in your hands.

### **IV.2—The Locus of Control: Suggested answers**

In the first set, #1 is external; the others are internal because:

- 2—this is core of internal dogma
- 3—as people figure out more and more about the world
- 4—if the world is a mechanism, then it’s possible to know how it works; no problem should be unsolvable if you look hard enough

In the second set, #2 is external; the others are internal because:

- 1—internally controlled people believe humans are in control
- 3—it’s all up to you in the internally controlled world
- 4—mechanisms (technology) are a hallmark of internally controlled thinking

In the third set, #1 is internal; the others are external because:

- 2—anything can happen in the external world
- 3—core of external dogma
- 4—externally controlled people don’t believe man can dominate

In the fourth set, #1 is internal; the others are external because:

- 2—not everything is knowable
- 3—you can’t necessarily make things happen
- 4—you can’t always be happy because that would mean you were in

control

#### IV.3—Score Yourself: The Locus of Control: Results

The following choices tend to be more characteristic of internally controlled people:

1a, 2a, 3b, 4a, 5b, 6a, 7a, 8b, 9a

The following choices tend to be more characteristic of externally controlled people:

1b, 2b, 3a, 4b, 5a, 6b, 7b, 8a, 9b

### CHAPTER FIVE

#### 5.5—What Would You Do? Friendship: Brief Notes

1. **Visa Problems**—There's no harm in trying, and especially not in being seen or known to have tried, even though you know you will get nowhere. (Or do you?) You could also explain that in a universalist culture like yours, the law is the law and connections don't help that much.
2. **Going Away**—Can you plead that because you live alone, it might not be safe? That there isn't always someone around as at the family's home? Can you say you've never done this sort of thing and would fear for the boy's well being? Can you say that without help, such as they always have, you would not be able to pull it off? Can you accept and hire someone to help?
3. **A Parental Visit**—You can try explaining that not introducing one's parents to a friend, especially if there are difficulties involved, doesn't have the same meaning as it does in the host country. You can use the excuses in the story. You can try something else to make up to your friend.
4. **Loan Star**—Try explaining that it isn't so much the money but the whole concept that is the problem. You don't mind doing them a favor, but the real favor would be to get them to examine their premises. You could say the money is needed for some other friend, in worse straits. You could say you can't afford it.
5. **Missing Funds**—Is an audit likely to be done in the next few months? Can you and he arrange a repayment schedule? Can you put the money in and have him repay you? Can he get a loan somewhere else?

#### 5.8—Men and Women: Brief Notes

1. **After Dark**—Be firm and unequivocal. Forget about cultural sensitivity and do what works to get the man out of your house. You might also suggest that he is taking advantage of your ignorance of his culture. You might say that we can talk about this later but that now he simply has to leave. Don't give openings or he might exploit them.
2. **Wedding Bells**—You can say you're not ready for marriage. You can

say your parents would want to approve of any future husband.

3. **Just the Two of Us**—The situation at the school is probably your biggest concern here. As long as you stop the relationship now, at the point you have learned it was not the “innocent” situation you thought it was, you should be able to defend your behavior if anyone maligns you.
4. **A Turning Point**—My, my. Is this really true, that her family would be ruined? Does anyone need to know that you slept together? This sort of thing must happen frequently here. Ask for some advice from HCNs.
5. **Pressure**—No response may be the best response here, except to stop seeing this man. One person calling you a racist, against the considerable evidence that you are not, will not harm you in the end, however painful it may be for you in the meantime. You can also try reasoning with him, of course, and explaining your culture and your personal feelings about a sexual relationship.
6. **Unrequited Feelings**—Chances are this will blow over. Move swiftly to stop the slander.

#### FUNDAMENTALS OF CULTURE—

#### COMPARING AMERICAN AND HOST COUNTRY VIEWS

1. Self identification: The mark for Americans is normally on the left here. If your host country mark is on the right side, HCNs might perceive Americans as selfish and not caring about others.
2. Egalitarian: The mark here for Americans is normally on the left side. HCNs on the right might think Americans care too much about people in general and not enough about close friends and family, that we are odd for trying to treat everybody like everybody else. Everybody *isn't* like everybody else.
3. Autonomous: Americans, on the left, come across to those on the right as too individualistic, not worrying or caring enough about the greater good, which is what will save us all in the end. Everyone has to work together.
4. Universalism: Americans (on the left) appear to HCNs on the left as too rigid trying to be fair when there is no need to be fair. These HCNs believe you have to take circumstances into account; they make all the difference.
5. Monochronic: Americans (monochronic) are seen by polychronic types as too concerned about time and schedules and not concerned enough about people.
6. One thing at a time: Americans (on the left) are too linear, according to their HCN opposites. They can't enjoy the moment or be spontaneous. They want to be in control.
7. Life is what I do: Americans (on the left) are too driven, too anxious. They don't know how to relax and just let things happen.



8. Progress is inevitable: Americans (on the left) are never satisfied with things as they are. As HCNs on the left see them, Americans always want to make things better.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **6.3—The Cycle of Adjustment: Suggested Answers**

1. II (you'll probably get used to them later)
2. IV (when you begin to realize you don't know as much as you think you do)
3. II
4. II
5. I
6. V
7. III
8. I, II, or III but not IV or V
9. III
10. II
11. III or V (depending on the person)
12. V
13. II
14. V (or III for some people)
15. IV
16. IV
17. V
18. I

### **6.6—The Four Levels of Cultural Awareness: Suggested Answers**

1. II or III *I understand less than I thought I did.*  
II is the better choice here, for by the time you are in III, you begin to understand *more* than you thought you did.
2. I *These people really aren't so different.*  
Phase I is the only choice here. If you were tempted to put IV, resist: Someone in IV may understand foreigners very well and interact easily with them, but he/she knows quite well that these people are different.
3. III *There is a logic to how these people behave.*

III is best here, for by now you are not only aware that these people are different (II) but you understand how they are different.

4. II or III *Living here is like walking on eggshells.*  
II is probably the best answer, for it is now beginning to dawn on you how easy it is to make mistakes. Someone in III might feel this way too, but by now you are starting to have more hope of figuring these people out and avoiding mistakes.
5. I *These people have no trouble understanding me.*  
You might have put IV here because you were thinking that a culturally sensitive foreigner would never do anything “foreign” in front of the local people. Someone in IV, however, while finding it easy to understand the local people, would not assume that they would easily understand a foreigner.
6. III *It's possible to figure these people out if you work at it.*  
This is really the only choice here, for someone in II wouldn't necessarily know enough to be able to do this.
7. II or III *I wonder what they think of me.*  
I does not apply here, for people in this phase think they *know* what the local people think of them. IV is out too, because at this level people *do* know what the local people are thinking. In II you would start to wonder, and you could still be wondering in III as well, even as you were getting a grip on the culture.
8. I or IV *I know what they think of me.*  
Those in I believe this mistakenly because they think they are just like the local people, but people in IV *do* know what local people think of them.
9. I or IV *It's nice to be able to relax and be myself.*  
People in I relax because they (wrongly) see nothing to worry about. People in IV can relax and be themselves because they have acquired enough of the local instincts to be able to trust their behavior.
10. II *I'll never figure these people out.*  
This can only be II, for by III you are beginning to figure people out.

11. I            *Why did people say this would be so difficult?*  
Because it is!
12. III          *There's hope for me here.*  
In II you might not be so sure of this, but by III you're starting to see cultural patterns and beginning to have hope.

**6.7—Attitudes Toward Cultural Difference—Part Two: Suggested Answers**

- |                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| I. Denial                         | Paragraph # 6               |
| II. Defense                       | Paragraph # 7               |
| III. Minimization                 | Paragraph # 8               |
| IV. Acceptance                    | First part of paragraph #10 |
| V. & VI. Adaptation & Integration | Last part of paragraph #10  |

**6.10—Can I Still Be Me? Brief notes**

1. **Holding Back?**—Can you make your points outside of meetings and still be effective? Can you enlist someone higher up to help you? Can you make your points in the meetings in a way that does not outshine him?
2. **Drawings**—Is there a way to approve the drawings and get them corrected later? Can you approach the division head for a confidential chat? Can you work with the cousin and make sure the drawings arrive at your desk in an approvable form? Can someone else work with this man and correct his drawings? Remember that saving face here is the issue.
3. **Friendly Advice**—Is the charge true? What are the consequences of ignoring the advice? Is this a battle you want to fight at this time? Can you consult other HCNs for their reading of the situation? How strongly do you feel about this?
4. **Good News**—This is a hard one. Will it make any difference if you don't rewrite your report? Will it just be ignored if it isn't favorable? How would you feel about saying no and having someone else rewrite it? Can you tone it down without being dishonest? Maybe you should get some other advice here.
5. **Extrovert**—Get some advice, but if these remarks are representative of the culture, then you may have to adjust your style, unless you are willing to live with the consequences.
6. **Away From Home**—Use explanations these men can accept about why you don't drink or visit prostitutes. You can use a cultural explanation or a personal one, or both. Try to show how your refusals are not personal, and try to spend time with these men in other pursuits, so they see it is not their company that you are avoiding, only these particular events.

