# **Cultural Dimensions by Edward Hall, Geert Hofstede and Others**

prepared by Koji Fuse Feb. 1, 2018

NOTE: The scale used by Geert Hofstede ranges from 0 (low) to 100 (high).

## (1) High-/Low-Context Culture

- High-context: Most of the meaning is either implied by the physical setting or presumed to be part of the individual's internalized beliefs, values, norms, and social practices; very little is provided in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message.
- Low-context: The majority of information is vested in the explicit code.



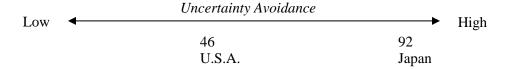
#### (2) Individualist / Collectivist Culture

- Individualism: The ties between individuals are loose; everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family.
- Collectivism: People from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive ingroups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.

Low 
$$\longleftarrow$$
 High 46 91 Japan U.S.A.

## (3) High-/Low-"Uncertainty Avoidance" Culture

• The extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations.



## (4) High-/Low-"Power Distance" Culture

• The extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.

## (5) Masculine / Feminine Culture

- Masculinity: Social gender roles are clearly distinct. For example, men are supposed to be
  assertive, tough, and focused on material success whereas women are supposed to be more
  modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.
- Femininity: Social gender roles overlap. For example, both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.

## (6) Culture with a Long-Term / Short-Term Orientation

• A person's point of reference about life and work.

#### **Food for Thought**

- 1. Are cultural dimensions absolute? Why or why not?
- 2. Do you agree or disagree with cultural relativism? Why?
- 3. Where do our cultural prejudices come from?
- 4. "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- 5. What is the best way to cultivate intercultural competence?

### References

Compare countries (n.d.). Retrieved from Hofstede Insights website: <a href="https://www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/">https://www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/</a>

Lusting, M. W., & Koester, J. (2006). *Intercultural competence: Interpersonal communication across cultures* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.