

**Slezská univerzita v Opavě
Obchodně podnikatelská fakulta v Karviné**



**PREPARATORY COURSE
FOR STUDENT MOBILITIES**

Krystyna Heinz

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Preparatory Course for Student Mobilities



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INTRODUCTION

The presented course Preparatory Course for student Mobilities has been designed as preparation for student mobilities both in bachelor and master studies using a modern critical incident technique requiring active and creative students' attitude.

Students will acquire knowledge in the following 3 interconnected areas needed for successful stays in target cultures:

1 Solving critical incidents related to major potential problems in target cultures followed by the clarification of typical culture phenomena in the background and justification of proper solutions

2 Creating a portfolio of documents necessary for stays in foreign countries, including CVs, motivation letters, self-reflective questionnaires evaluating students' progress in the area of intercultural skills and submitting students' own critical incidents after their return to the home country.

3 Developing students' culture awareness and sensitivity to foreign cultures leading to empathy and tolerance

Students are also asked to study the specifics of their target cultures and present their work to the class at the end of the semester.

Requirements to finish the course involve

- 1 Submitting a portfolio of documents related to operating in target culture
- 2 Active participation in discussions related to the critical incident solution
- 2 Oral examination.

The structure of each unit is related to

- Solving a critical incident or a task
- Guidance to solution
- Additional exercises and tasks developing students' communication promptness and preparation for their target cultures
- Information about the most frequent target cultures for Erasmus students
- A teacher's lecture which is not included in the text book.

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UNIT 1

Communication - addressing people, different attitudes to hierarchy, directness and indirectness

1 Addressing people is extremely important when doing business in a foreign culture or studying abroad as address systems show differences between members of the society or indicate ignorance of social distinctions. In addition, they can represent values of different generations, hierarchy in the society as well as they can reflect direct and indirect communication styles.

Study the following 2 critical incidents in small groups and answer the following questions:

**What is the reason of the critical situation?
What specific culture values does it reflect?
What is the possible solution?**

A Critical incident 1

Kurara has just arrived from Japan to begin working on her degree at an American university. Before her arrival to the United States, Kurara had read several books about America, its people and its culture. Despite her preparation, however, several confusing and frustrating incidents occurred during his first weeks in the United States.

On Mondays Kurara was always very busy. She had classes all day and hardly had any time for lunch. One day she showed up at her history class a couple minutes before it started and told one of his classmates, Julianne, that she was really busy all morning and didn't have time for lunch. The bell rang and the teacher came into the class. Julianne opened her backpack and took out a small bag of potato chips and a can of soda and gave them to Kurara. However, she was very surprised and embarrassed. She whispered thank you to her friend and refused the food. Kurara was even more furious when Julianne took another bag of potato chips and started eating them in class. To Kurara's amazement, the teacher did not make any comments on Julianne's behavior and proceeded with the class as usual.



Picture 1

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=Team+working+pictures>

B Critical incident 2

Mr. Jenkins: We're going to have to keep the production line running on Saturday.

Mr. Wu: I see.

Mr. Jenkins: Can you come to work on Saturday?

Mr. Wu: Yes, well, I think so.

Mr. Jenkins: Perfect, that'll be a great help.

Mr. Wu: Yes, Saturday is a special day, did you know?

Mr. Jenkins: What do you mean?

Mr. Wu: It's my son's birthday.

Mr. Jenkins: How nice. I hope you'll all enjoy it very much.

Mr. Wu: Thank you. I appreciate your understanding.

2 Guidance to solution - explanation of the background.

People who come from cultures using indirect communication style tend to infer and suggest rather than approach and say things in a direct way. These cultures tend to be more collectivist, where harmony and saving face are the greatest values; therefore there is a natural tendency toward indirectness and away from confrontation. In collectivist cultures, groups are well-established and people don't need to talk much to deliver their message. This understanding is known as context, and in high-context cultures messages often do not even need words and are implicit; and are often expressed using non-verbal signals. The goal of most communication exchanges is preserving the relationship with the other persons.



Picture 2

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=Team+working+pictures>

Direct cultures tend to be less collectivist and more individualist, with less well-developed groups. People lead more independent lives and have fewer shared experiences, therefore there is less understanding of others. People need to communicate directly and explicitly to say exactly what they mean rather than suggest or imply. There is less communication context and the spoken word carries most of the meaning. The goal of most communication exchanges is to deliver a message.

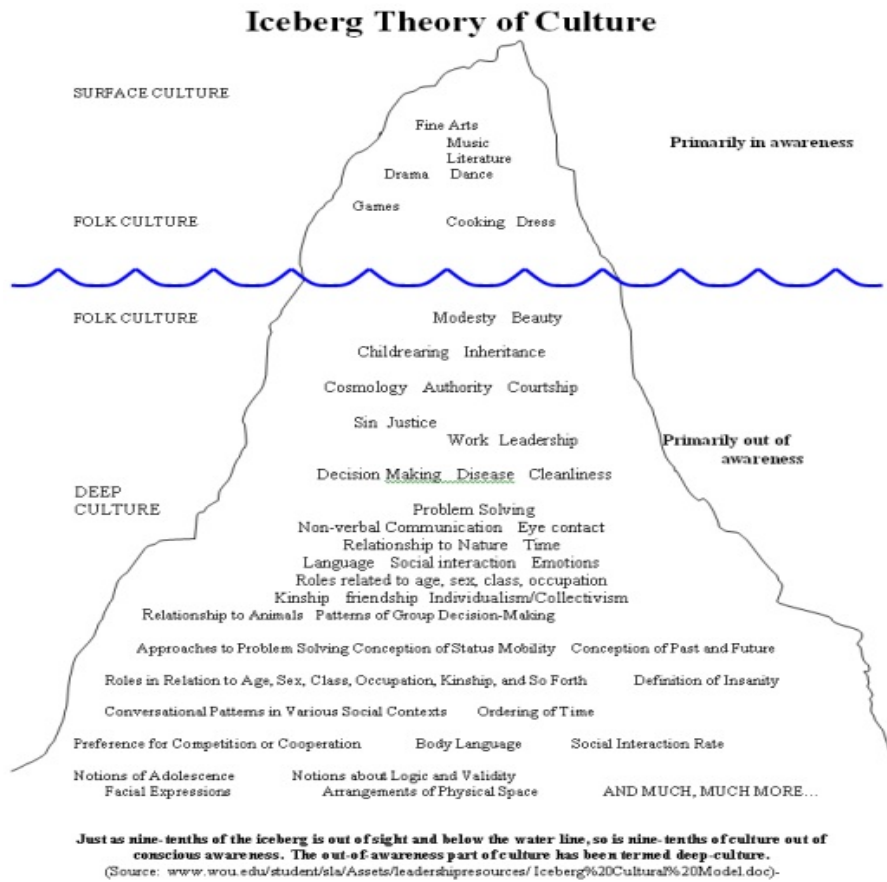
Another important factor influencing successful intercultural communication is addressing people that reflects hierarchy in the specific society as well as other culture values. In Jordan,

for example, the word *sheikh* (beard) characterizes the addressee as a religious person. Wearing a beard is interpreted as a typical feature of a faithful Moslem in the traditional surroundings. In Turkish language reflecting extremely high hierarchy in the society, it is possible to notice addresses when you do not know the person's name or title used in formal situations and to strangers -for males *Beyefendi* (Sir) and for females - *Hanımefendi* (Miss or Madam). A less formal kind of address is used when you know the name, e.g. *Mustafa bey* (Mr.Mustafa) and *Ayşe hanım* (Mrs. or Miss Ayşe). These are used in formal situations when you know the person's first name but also in informal situations to acquaintances, friends and even to your own family members.

Numerous languages use polite pronouns, like *du-Sie* in German, *tú-usted* in Spanish, *tu-vos* in Portuguese, and *ty-vy* in Czech, but some languages, e.g. English, have only one functional pronoun of address – *you*. A lot of German speakers of English face the possibility of transfer of address types from German causing non-standard address behaviour that can lead to communication problems. It has been proved in studies that German address behaviour is based on many factors like social distance, authority, respect, solidarity, but also physical appearance of the interlocutor, location and duration of the interaction, age of participants, occupation, educational level, etc.

In Japanese, there exist some fixed expressions used for example during a job interview, when an applicant is expected to express dishonorifics toward the future employer and humble his or her own action, saying *o-machi shite orimasu* (I am humbly waiting). In Japanese society, a display of humble attitude is valued, especially in the situations when power is not distributed equally. A lower-status person should sound hesitant, indirect and apologetic, which from a Westener's point of view is not necessary. It means that good qualifications of applicants must be combined with the ability to humble himself or herself and to promise improvement in the future.

3 Study Hofstede's Iceberg Model related to culture values and make comments.



Picture 3
 Source: G. Hofstede. Culture's Consequences.

4 Add a paragraph related to particular culture values, politeness and the ways of addressing people in your target culture.

I have found out that

5 Read the following critical incident related to the direct communication in a concrete culture. Guess which culture is described – choose from the following ones: Finnish, the US, Japanese and Turkish cultures and try to explain what has happened.

Jana, a Czech girl, is studying within Erasmus + programme in a foreign country. She was invited to her friend's home for coffee and decided to make a typically Czech cake. She gave it to her friend's mother. Having received it, the lady asked if Jana would like to have coffee with the family, but Jana, in a way typical for the target culture, said no. The offer was not repeated again and the result was that Jana was not even offered the cake. She was a little embarrassed, because the cake was made for coffee.

6 Tell if the following statements related to Finnish culture are true or false.

- | | |
|--|------------|
| Finns are lacking language proficiency. | T F |
| Finns tend to address each other using their first names. | T F |
| Non-verbal signals are intensive. | T F |
| Finns are perceived as too silent by non-Finns. | T F |
| Gender roles in Finland are not differentiated. | T F |
| Honesty, directness and care for environment are important. | T F |

7 In far Eastern cultures people have different attitudes to offers and there are rituals connected with accepting and refusing them. Find out about the procedure in Japanese culture and write a paragraph.

8 In groups try to create your own critical incident related to culture values, addressing, and direct x indirect communication based on the following scheme:

- Description of the situation
- The incident – misunderstanding
- Its analysis referring to theoretical background
- Listing possible solutions
- Prevention to similar incidents.

Present it to other teams and ask for alternative solutions.

9 Read the following information about the Finnish sauna and find something of the same importance in your own culture as well as your target culture.

The sauna has a special role in the domestic life of Finns. It is an experience shared with family and friends. Important business meetings may be followed by a sauna in which the conversation is continued on a more informal basis. Saunas are found everywhere.

There are approximately 1,212,000 saunas in private apartments and another 800,000 in summer cottages and public swimming pools. This means more than 2,000,000 saunas for a population of 5.2 million.

10 Find information about a specific phenomenon in your target culture and write a paragraph about it.

UNIT 2

Nonverbal Dimension – intensity and culture differences

Communication can be defined as a transfer or exchange of information between entities. Communication is one of the basic needs of human existence, but verbal communication is not the only means of communication available to us. Non-verbal communication includes any communication which is independent of a formal language and, nowadays, there are numerous means of non-verbal communication.

Some areas of non-verbal communication can differ between cultures. These differences can mainly be related to kinesics and oculistics, but also to proxemics and haptics.

1 Study the following critical incidents in small groups and try to write an appropriate explanation. See the example of the first and second critical incidents.

A Sales representatives from Germany and Britain are in difficult negotiation and the atmosphere is getting tense. Helmut Kaufman sits upright and is disturbed with Bill Hank's relaxed position in his chair. Helmut feels that Bill is not taking the negotiation seriously. Bill feels that Helmut is getting more and more aggressive.

Explanation

The German's upright position indicates the seriousness in Helmut's attitude to the situation. The two people misinterpret each other's behaviour, therefore the situation escalates. The nonverbal discipline involved in this case is posturics.

B A US manager reports problems with Japanese staff. He asked them how the project was going and found out that little had been done. Moreover, he became suspicious when the Japanese employees did not look in his eyes.

Explanation

The length of time that it is acceptable to look directly at someone can differ from one country to the next. In some cultures looking someone in the eyes means honesty or interest. However, in other countries it might be a sign of disrespect – like in Japanese culture. Visitors to Japan can be thought to be staring intrusively, especially during the interaction between a supervisor and a subordinate. Eye contact belongs to oculistics.

C A businessman from continental Europe arrives for a meeting in London, wearing a suit, a sports jacket and a tie. His British counterpart who is wearing a suit is asking him whether his luggage has been lost by the airline.

Explanation

D A European businessperson is sitting on a chair with his leg crossing the other one, exposing one of his soles in an Arab country. His partner feels insulted seeing it.

Explanation

E European manager who came to work in the USA was pleased to have an excellent secretary. After she had completed another piece of work long before the deadline, he went up to her, tapped her on the shoulder and thanked her. Her response was to complain to the manager’s boss.

Explanation

F An Argentinian student is attending an English course in England. He often stays behind after his class to ask the British lecturer some questions. When he approaches, the teacher begins to move away. The student wonders whether the teacher doesn’t like him or whether students are not supposed to ask questions after classes.

Explanation

2 Guidance to solution - explanation of the background.

The basic disciplines within nonverbal communication are the following:

haptics, kinesics, mimics, oculistics, olfactorics, paralanguistics, posturics, and proxemics. Decide which of them correspond with the paragraphs in the text.

Humans are generally thought to have five senses and communication for them can be related to any of these senses. Non-verbal communication related to the sense of sight involves motion, colour and shape. In nature, there are numerous examples of this kind of communication.

People have other means of visual communications such as facial expressions and gestures. Facial expressions, like a frown or a smile, are effectively used by us on various occasions to communicate our meaning. A dancer uses gestures to communicate with spectators. So does a mime artist. Gestures can be both unambiguous and ambiguous. If somebody pointed to a jug of water and then at their mouth, this would be an example of an unambiguous gesture. It would be obvious to another person that the first person was requesting a drink. There is

hardly any chance of misinterpretation here. On the other hand, there are gestures that have different meanings in different circumstances. Their meaning depends upon various factors: cultural, geographical, social, etc.

It has been experimentally shown that feelings of calmness, lethargy, anger, depression, cheerfulness and so on can be communicated using various muscles in the face. Look at the faces and say what kind of feeling they express.

1



2



3



4



5



6



Picture 1

Source: available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=face+expressions>

Body distance is very important. It means how close you can get to another person you are talking to without invading his or her personal zone. Acceptable distances vary according to cultures, e.g. in the US culture the comfort zone is about an arm's length, while in Latin America people have tendency to get close to each other.

Tone of the voice, the speed accent and intonation are also significant factors within nonverbal signals. The statements that in one culture sound like a hysterical argument in another one can be considered the norm for a reasonable discussion. People very often come to wrong conclusions leading to misunderstandings.

Communication can be related to the olfactory senses too. Substances known as pheromones are used by certain insects and animals to communicate their sexual desire to the opposite sex.

Pheromones are also used to convey anger, fear, threat, danger, etc. Pheromones are used by humans too, though unconsciously and to a very small degree when compared to their use in animals. However, there are cultures where people must smell the others, which means that they tend to stand very close to each other and they choose their perfumes carefully.

The sense of touch is a powerful form of communication. A kiss, a handshake, a hug or even a simple pat on the back can communicate more effectively than a dozen spoken words. Some people even claim to be able to hold another person's hand and reveal their thoughts by the varying tensions of their muscles.

3 In groups study the following gestures and try to state what they can mean in different cultures.



A Thumb



up

Picture 2

Source: available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=face+expressions>

B A circle sign made with a thumb and a forefinger

1.

C Nodding the head

D Shrugging shoulders



Picture 3

Source: available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=face+expressions>

4 Work in teams. European and Asian cultures are different in many aspects. Choose a specific Asian country, e.g. People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Korea, and research the business subculture of the country, and write a report summarizing what you would need to know to conduct business successfully there (business etiquette, roles and status, decision-making customs, concepts of time, verbal and nonverbal communication styles, and so on).

Picture 4

Available

<https://www.google.cz/search?q=face+expressions>

from:



5 Say if the following statements are true or false about the appearance and nonverbal communication in Japanese business etiquette.

Men should wear dark conservative attire. Business suits are most suitable.

Shoes should be easy to remove.

Women's dress does not have to be conservative.

Women should only wear low-heeled shoes to avoid towering over men.

The "OK" sign means the same in Japan.

Pointing is not acceptable.

Personal space is valued. As the Japanese live in such a densely populated area, they value their personal space.

It is not acceptable to blow your nose in public

The Japanese are not comfortable with silence.

6 Comment the following statements and compare the Japanese behaviour to European one.

In Japan, business cards are called *meishi*. Japanese give and receive *meishi* with both hands. It should be printed in your home language on one side and Japanese on the other. Present the card with your home country language side up.

It is impossible to write on the card and put it in the pocket or wallet.

In a business situation, business cannot begin until the *meishi* exchange process is complete.

The customary greeting is the bow.

The Japanese have to use honorific forms.

The Japanese prefer not to use the word no.

Most information in the communication context is implicit.

7 In groups try to create your own critical incident related to nonverbal signals in various cultures, but especially in your target culture. Share it with other students.

UNIT 3

Division of cultures

Intercultural communication is a new field of research. It is multidisciplinary and involves knowledge coming from interrelated disciplines like anthropology, psychology, sociology, linguistics, history, business studies, communication science, geography, etc.

The study of cultures conducted by G.Hofstede, E.T.Hall and F. Trompenaars have led to the culture dimensions, such as individualism versus collectivism, monochrony versus polychrony, masculinity versus femininity, high power distance versus low power distance, high uncertainty avoidance versus low uncertainty avoidance, high context versus low context, high contact versus low contact, etc.

1 Study the following 2 critical incidents in small groups and try to write an appropriate explanation. See the example of the first and second critical incidents.

A British businessman in Saudi Arabia wants to secure an important deal. He has a tight schedule and cannot afford to waste any time. His frustration increases because he has to wait for ages to get an appointment with his Saudi partner. Meetings never start on time, and when they do, there are frequent interruptions with people coming in to get papers signed and arrange other things. The Saudi partner even takes phone calls when his visitor is in the room.



Picture 1

Available from :<https://www.google.cz/search?q=Time+dimensions+pictures>

Explanation

This is an example of the difference between polychronic and monochronic cultures. In polychronic cultures it is acceptable to do several things at the same time, and the approach to deadlines is flexible. In monochronic cultures one thing is done at a time and the stress is on deadlines and schedules.

B The US manager of a major car producer was finding it increasingly difficult to work in China. During meetings his Chinese colleagues hardly said anything. When they were asked if they agreed to his suggestions, they always said “yes”, but they did not do anything to follow this idea. The only time they opened up was in a bar in the evening, but that was stressful for the US manager because he was expected to come to the bar every evening.

Explanation

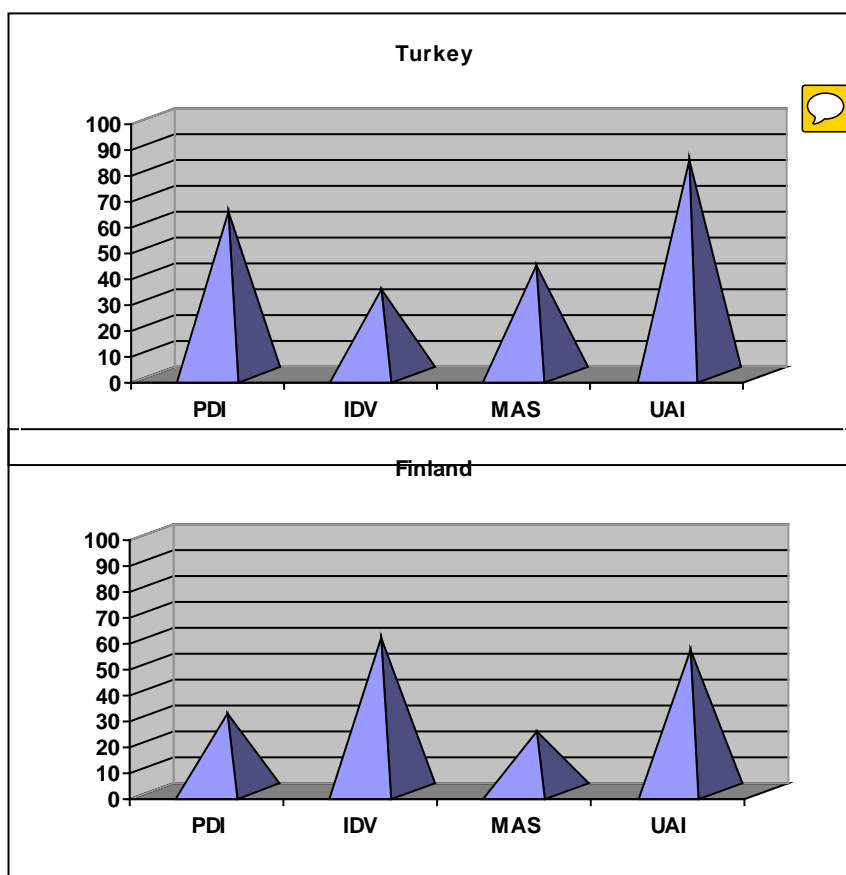
This accident illustrates division into high and low context cultures. In high context cultures such as Japanese the message is not always put into words-nonverbal signals are important as well as the communication context. Relationship building is crucial and there is an

emphasis on getting to know a business partner. In low context cultures as USA meaning is made explicit and put into words. These cultures tend to be task-oriented rather than relationship-centered.

C A Belgian manager working in Thailand is unhappy that his secretary regularly arrives at work at least 30 minutes late. He knows that the traffic in Bangkok is bad and the situation is getting ridiculous. One morning, when she arrives late again, he explodes in front of the others in the busy office. He then takes her aside and tells her that if she cannot get to work on time she might lose her job. Her reaction is handing in her notice.

Explanation

D Below you can see 2 charts related to culture dimensions in two different cultures- Compare them in groups and write your comments.



Picture 2
Source: G. Hofstede. Culture's Consequences.

E Try to divide the following features into the feminine and masculine ones that reflect in the division to cultures high and low masculinity values. According to Hofstede in masculine cultures the roles of men and women are distinct. Men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success while women should be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.

- 1 managers aim for consensus
- 2 managers are expected to be decisive
- 3 people live to work
- 4 competition and performance are important at work
- 5 caring for others is a dominant value
- 6 equality and solidarity are important at work
- 7 conflicts are fought out
- 8 conflicts are solved by compromise

2 Guidance to solution - explanation of the background.

G.Hofstede is known for his work on four dimensions of cultural variability based on the survey data collected from multinational corporations in 40 countries. Uncertainty avoidance refers to how comfortable people feel towards ambiguity. Cultures which ranked low feel more comfortable with the unknown. As a result high uncertainty avoidance cultures prefer formal rules and they feel with uncertainty uncomfortable.

Power distance is related to the distribution of power in institutions and organisations. People in high power distance cultures are more comfortable with a larger status differential than low power distance cultures.

Masculinity and femininity dimension refers to expected tender roles in a culture. Masculine cultures tend to have very distinct expectations of male and female roles in society while feminine cultures have a greater ambiguity in what is expected of each gender.

The dimension of individualism refers to the orientation that people in different countries have toward their work. Individualistic cultures are task-oriented, individuals are self-motivated and seek individual appraisal and reward. Collectivist cultures are motivated by their desire to advance the interests of the group, they seek reward for the group.

E.T.Hall described other important concepts concerning cultural differences – time, context and space. Time with monochronic cultures is characterised as linear, tangible, and divisible. Events are scheduled one item at a time and this schedule takes precedence over interpersonal relationships. Polychronic time is characterised by simultaneous occurrence of many things and by a great involvement with people.

High and low context refers to the amount of information that a person can comfortably manage. In high context cultures background information is implicit while in low context cultures much of the information must be made explicit and people from low context cultures usually verbalize much more background information.

Trompenaars classified cultures along a mix of behavioural and value patterns. Their research is based on the cultural dimensions of business executives identifying seven value orientations. Some of these value orientations can be regarded as nearly identical to Hofstede's dimensions. The seven value dimensions identified were: universalism versus particularism, communitarianism versus individualism, neutral versus emotional, diffuse versus specific, achievement versus ascription, human-time and human-nature relationships.

3 Discussion work. In groups study another critical incident related to one of the Trompenaars’s dimensions, write an explanation and suggest a solution.

You are riding in a car driven by your close friend. He hits a pedestrian. You know he was riding at least 80 km per hour in an area where the speed limit is 50 km per hour. There are no witnesses and if you testified that your friend was driving with the right speed, he would be saved from serious consequences.

What right does your friend have to expect you to protect him? What would you do if you were a sworn witness? Which Trompenaars’s dimension is the incident related to?

4 Study the following text related to Turkish culture. Find information related to culture dimensions in this country and discuss it with other groups. Write a summary, beginning e.g. like this:

Turkish culture is close to polychronic cultures.....

By understanding Turkish culture and by observing by the appropriate etiquette, you can gain respect from the people of Turkey. Being a Muslim country, religion plays a major role in people's everyday lives and it also shapes their values and ideals. The following issues are considered inappropriate and should be avoided when communicating with Turkish people:



Picture 3
Source: own processing

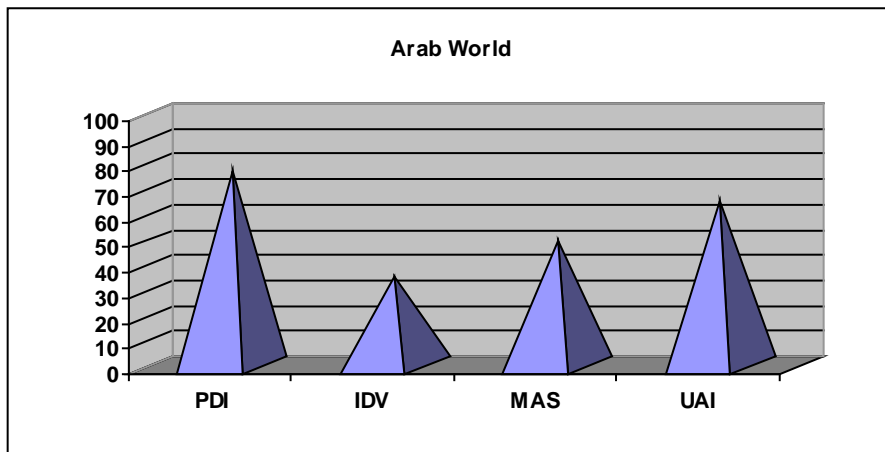
- Family is sacred, don't disrespect their family.
- Turkish people stand close to you during a conversation. It is normal in Turkey to have very little interpersonal space.
- Certain gestures and body language have different meanings varying from rude to insulting and offensive, such that the following should be avoided:
 - Standing with your hands on your hips or in your pockets.
 - Pointing at someone with your finger.
 - Showing the soles of your feet.
 - Making the "OK" sign with your hand.
 - Discussing business right away without getting to know your partner first.
 - Using pressure tactics, such as imposing a deadline.
 - Showing a lack of respect for cultural values and adopting a patronising or authoritarian attitude.
 - Talking about sensitive historical issues, such as the Armenian issue or the division of Cyprus.

Understanding Turkish culture, in order to avoid misunderstandings and showing a lack of respect for Turkish beliefs and views, will help to develop business relationships and maintain future ties. It is also recommended to learn several Turkish words, which Turkish people appreciate very much.

5 In groups find out about M.K.Ataturk's reforms and about his contribution to the foundation of the Turkish Republic.

6 Discuss the current political and social situation in Turkey in terms of the perspective to join the EU in the future.

7 Compare the following chart to the presented above one about Turkish culture. Discuss the differences.



Picture 4
Source: G. Hofstede. Culture's Consequences.

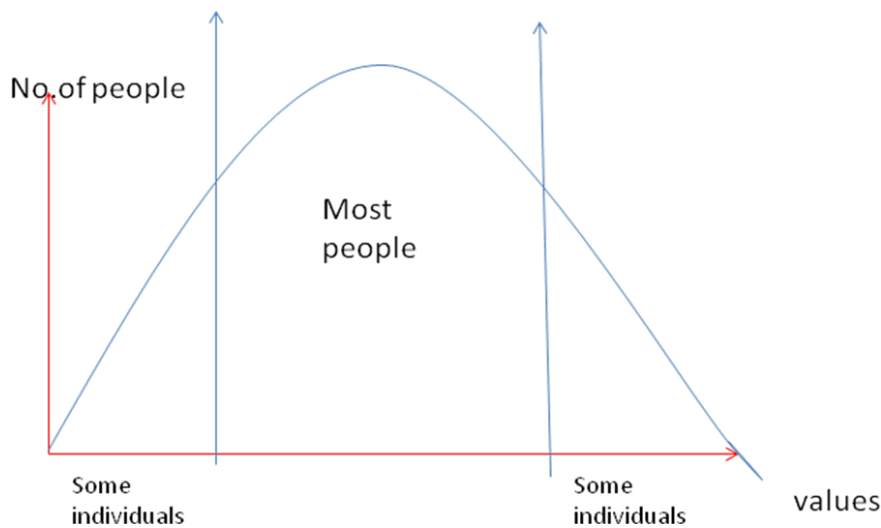
8 In groups try to create your own critical incident related to division of cultures and reflecting the situation in your target culture. Share it with other students.

UNIT 4

Overcoming stereotypes and prejudice

From the sociological point of view people tend to make stereotypes because of categorizing, i.e. creating in- and out-groups. Stereotyping often happens not so much because of aggressive or unkind thoughts, but it is more often a simplification or generalization to rank people and call them for example *black people*, *Vietnamese*, *policemen*, *Jews*, etc. The most frequent stereotypes are ethnic stereotypes, however, there also exists gender stereotyping when men stereotype women and women stereotype men, age stereotyping, etc. Although stereotyping can be subconscious, it can bias people's decisions and actions.

1 Study the following graph showing that it is possible to make generalizations about cultures, but not about individuals. Make your own comments and give proper examples.



Picture 5

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=Stereotypes+graphs>

2 Explain the following ironic stereotypes and try to make your own ones about other nationalities.

flexible as a Swede _____

This stereotype refers to the opinion that the Swedes are very slow and indecisive in doing business.

talkative as a Finn _____

organized as an Italian _____

friendly as a German _____

lazy as a Japanese _____

incorruptible as a Czech _____

obeying traffic rules like a Turk _____

sober as a Pole _____

eating healthy food like a Slovak _____

3 Study the stereotyping map of Europe in groups. Try to explain the stereotypes.



Picture 6

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=Stereotyping+map+of+Europe>

Begin like this:

Germany is represented by a girl serving a glass of beer, which means that

4 Read the following case study. Explain what type of culture Finnish culture belongs to in terms of Hofstede’s dimensions. Then make the analysis of the case study and suggest a solution.

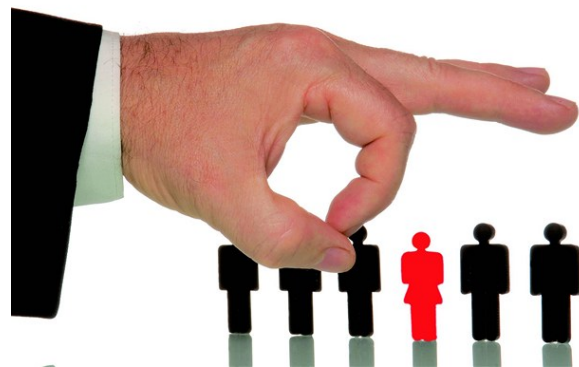
In Finland, it became possible for women to become a priest in the Lutheran church. At the moment about 27% of the priests are women. Even if this fact has formally been accepted, it is still a topic of argumentation.

The media informed that there had been a case when a man priest had been dismissed because of refusing to cooperate with a woman priest. There have even been people who have decided to leave the church because a woman was a priest, but still for them it was normal to have a woman as a president.

This issue is sensitive and it has risen up a lot of problems. Approximately 100 people a day withdraw their church membership.

5 Guidance to solution - explanation of the background.

Stereotypes and prejudices can become significant barriers to effective intercultural communication. Stereotype is a fixed idea or image that many people have of a particular type of person or thing, but which is not true in reality. The word comes from printing, where it was used to describe the printing plate for producing the same image repeatedly. Stereotypes are based on rigid generalizations which can be a barrier to the effective interpretation of a situation. Prejudice is a negative judgement or opinion formed about a group without knowledge of the facts. Discrimination means treating people in a less favourable way because they are members of a particular group.



Picture 7

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=acculturation+pictures>

A very frequent example of national stereotyping involves the image of the German people. They are considered to be hard working, accurate, punctual, and lacking the sense of humour. However, the reality shows that after the reunification the rate of unemployment is high and some people have a relaxed attitude to work. The German working week is 20 per cent shorter than the Japanese one, but not many people know that the Germans have the highest levels of dual-language competence in Europe and are able to discuss business in a foreign language, and on business they keep terms, have tight delivery dates, high penalties for failure and provide generous warranty periods.

There exist frequent prejudices about polygamy in Islam. Its sources can be found in the shortage of information. Polygamy is a very ancient practice to protect widows. In the past, when a lot of men were killed in wars, it was necessary to look after the widows and it was usually the duty of the dead person's brother to take care of his sister-in-law. Moreover, women in some cultures do not look at polygamy as a sign of women's degradation and very often co-wives cooperate with each other taking care of their children and household.

Discrimination occurs when we treat people differently. It can take many forms. Some people can be discouraged from living in a neighbourhood of a minority group, women and minorities can be victimized by discrimination in employment, education, and social services. We may be afraid of people having mental illnesses and some clubs have restrictive membership policies which do not permit Jews, African-Americans, women, and others to join.

In the 19th century Europe, Jews, for example, were classified as an inferior race with specific physical and personality characteristics. This attitude was based on negative stereotypes existing in anti-Semitism showing the Jews as a foreign element, which could contaminate the native people and culture, and potentially dominate the native population economically and politically. These opinions provided a seed-bed for the Nazi ideology and programme of genocide.

6 The following intercultural tests focus on the Arab people who are stereotyped very frequently. Choose the best answer and justify your choice.

1 Arabs mostly do not like bargaining. T F

2 The Arabs frequently value most
Freedom
Happiness
Competition
Family unity and security.

3 You are in Saudi Arabia. Your host offers you a cup of Arabian coffee. You don't drink it. What would you say?

- “No, thank you”.
- “Thank you, I don't drink coffee”.
- “Coffee makes me nervous”.
- You accept the cup of coffee.

4 You are an American and you are inviting an Arabian businessman to your home. You should

- Introduce him to your family
- Ask your wife to prepare a good pork meal
- Have a discussion with him about Islam and Middle East politics
- Serve a good brand name wine with the dinner.

5 This is your first week in an Arabian company. You become acquainted with a few Arabian managers. You should

- Prepare a barbecue in your house and invite them in
- Wait until your host's manager invites you to his house
- Ask your co-manager if you can visit his house and meet his family
- Invite them for a potluck at your home.

6 You are having dinner with your Arabian host. You notice that they do not use a fork or spoon. You should

- Do the same and use your hands
- Say "I am not feeling comfortable eating"
- Ask for a fork and spoon
- Ask permission to use your hands as well.

7 Religion has an impact on almost everyone in the Arabian culture. T F

7 Islam is the dominating religion in Arabic countries. List the most important facts related to Islam using the following headings.

Five pillars of Islam

Prophets

The Koran

Mosque

8 Try to create your own critical incident related to Arabic cultures and your target culture. Share it with other students.

UNIT 5

Adaptation to a foreign culture – overcoming culture shock

When studying and working some time abroad, it is necessary to be prepared for the process of acquiring a second culture. Acculturation, the gradual adaptation to the target culture without losing national identity, has been researched intensively and the researchers have developed frameworks for investigating the psychological processes that underlie acculturation. It occurs when characteristics of a group are changed because of interaction with another cultural or ethnic group, for example Erasmus students in classrooms all over Europe vary in many different ways including their level of acculturation.



Picture 1

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=acculturation+pictures>

1 Analyze the following critical incidents and find their most appropriate reasons. Then try to give your own explanation related to the cases.

A Don, an American, is interviewing candidates for a managerial job in his company based in China. One of the internal candidates is Li-Chen Nguyen. She is a computer programmer whose technical work is excellent. She has been a member of some of the most successful work teams in the company. When Don interviews her, he tries to get information from her. He wants her to talk about her leadership contributions to the groups. However, Li-Chen looks at her hands; she says everyone in the group worked hard and she seems embarrassed.

Don is surprised at such behaviour as it is unusual in his home country and begins to wonder if Li-Chen has the skills needed to be an effective manager.

Explanation

B You are a European manager on an assignment in Hong Kong for six months. Lately, you have been feeling irritation and cannot get on with family and colleagues. You even criticized your assistant for a small error. What is wrong with you?

1. You are obviously under a great deal of stress and gradually losing your mind.
2. You are not fit for an overseas assignment and should only accept domestic assignments.
3. You just don't like Hong Kong and would do better somewhere else.
4. You are experiencing the normal strain of adjustment to a different cultural environment.

Explanation

C You are on technical assignment in Saudi Arabia. The site manager stands very near when you are both looking at a computer screen and you are becoming uncomfortable. How should you interpret this situation?

1. The manager is obviously "coming on" to you.
2. The manager is feeling very comfortable with you and you should take it as a compliment.
3. The manager is trying to get close to you so that you will speak favourably of the Saudi operation at headquarters.
4. The manager is merely observing the customary amount of "personal space" between colleagues in his country.

Explanation

D You set up a video conference in the US for Mexican business associates on October 31. The technicians are having a Halloween party and come in costumes. The Mexicans are in formal business attire and are clearly displeased. What is the problem?

1. The Mexicans are upset by the macabre nature of the costumes, which they consider an affront to their religion.
2. The Mexicans are offended by the disrespect shown to a serious business setting by the frivolity and informality of the costumes.
3. The Mexicans were hurt that they were not included in the festivities as honoured guests.
4. The Mexicans thought the technicians were not showing them the proper respect as managers.

Explanation

2 Guidance to solution - explanation of the background.

For students and people working abroad, problems with acculturation and culture shock can be connected with the identity crisis, where one feels neither bound firmly to the native culture nor adapted to the new culture yet experiencing numerous unpleasant situation and very often not being aware of the existence of the mentioned phenomena.

The process of acculturation is obviously accompanied by learning a new language and adapting to a new culture, which are challenges faced especially by students who go to study abroad within a programme or people working abroad. The literature indicates that individuals experience distinct stages in the process of adapting to a different culture, but not all persons advance through the stages in the same manner. If students and others are not given adequate support, they may experience personal challenges in the acculturation process.

There have been created numerous acculturation models, Acton-Walker de Felix's acculturation model being one of the most famous. It involves four stages:

- *Tourist* - the new culture is inaccessible and culture shock is probable to occur. In the language spoken first language strategies and resources are used.
- *Survivor*- is the stage of functional language and functional understanding of the culture. A lot of people do not pass through this stage, for example people coming abroad for manual labour jobs.
- *Immigrant* - is the stage reached by most literate people who spend an extended period of time working and living in a foreign culture. The degree of acculturation is expected.

- *Citizen* - is almost at the level of the native speaker. The person is expected to have both pronunciation and gestures very similar to those of natives.

The above mentioned Acton-Walker de Felix's model follows similar characteristics as other acculturation models, which means the initial honeymoon stage, leading to feelings of initial euphoria, then culture shock, resulting from feelings of disorientation, hostility towards the host culture, leading to feelings of resentment, initial adaptation, leading to a sense of autonomy within the host culture, and finally assimilation into the host culture, leading to a sense of belonging to both the host and home culture.

Culture shock occurring usually after the first stage in the mentioned model refers to phenomena ranging from mild irritability to deep psychological panic and crisis. Culture shock is associated with feelings of anger, hostility, frustration, loneliness and homesickness. E.T. Hall describes a hypothetical example of an American living abroad (Japan) for the first time in the following way: At first things are the same. But soon the American discovers that under familiar exterior there are vast differences. When someone says "yes", it often does not mean yes at all, and when people smile, it does not mean they are pleased. People tell him that they will do the things and do not. The longer he stays, the more enigmatic the country looks.



Picture 2

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=acculturation+pictures>

Some acculturation models involve the flight stress response, which enables individuals to escape, avoid and distance themselves from the source of threat. There are examples of students who literally must flee from school when faced with unexpected and stressful social situations. One of them happened in School of Business Administration in Karviná when a Turkish Erasmus student left the Czech Republic because of not being able to cope with sharing a kitchen and pots at the dorms with the students who cooked and ate pork. In this case, the spontaneous act of flight protected the boy from threat.

The recommendation related to overcoming culture shock involves analyzing objectively the differences between home and host country and looking for the reasons the host country does things differently. It is also necessary to set some goals for yourself to re-develop the feeling of control in a person's life, e.g. planning some activities, studying a foreign language every day and watching programmes in this language, finding local friends and talking to them about feelings and problems in specific situations. All these activities should give people more self-confidence that can help them to cope with culture shock and its symptoms.

3 Have you ever experienced culture shock or do you know someone who has experienced it? Where? What were its symptoms and ways of overcoming it?

4 You are going to study at a partner's university for a semester. Try to search significant information related to the way of life there as a preparation for your stay. Share acquired information with other students.

5 What in your opinion is the source of culture shock for foreigners staying in the Czech Republic? Carry out a questionnaire research in the group of Erasmus students and evaluate its outcomes. Write a paragraph about it.

The most frequent source of culture shock for foreign students in the Czech Republic is food, especially for _____

6 Read the following information related to Polish culture.

Statistics show that Poland is one of the most corrupted countries in the European Union. But what is fraud or corruption? Is it the headline news of large corporate bosses finding means of funneling cash through transactions with other entities often through other countries? Or does it include the grey market economy where people do not work officially not paying taxes and, where possible, claiming social security benefits? Does this also include employees taking advantage of their workplace, such as taking stationary for private purposes, surfing the Internet for cheap vacations during work and using the office phone for private telephone calls.

Poland has a grey market of over 24 percent. It is the second poorest country in the EU when measured by the GDP per capita. Out of 250 or so regions in the EU, Poland's 16 include six of the 10 poorest

Discuss the questions asked in the paragraph above and try to answer them .Does corruption exist in your home country? What do you know about the *Corruption Perceptions Index* and its latest results?

7 Locate someone, preferably a businessperson, who has spent some time in another country, and interview him or her about the experience. What preparation did the person have before going to the country? In what ways was the preparation adequate? Inadequate? How might he or she have prepared differently? Ask for anecdotes about particular communication.

8 Say if the following statements are true or false about Polish people.

- | | |
|---|--------|
| When arriving at a meeting, Polish people shake hands. | YES/NO |
| Some people exchange embraces or even a kiss during a greeting. | YES/NO |
| This indicates familiarity rather than love. | YES/NO |
| A kissed greeting is not only a delicate touch of cheeks. | YES/NO |
| It is necessary to have information about addressing people in Polish culture. | YES/NO |
| If you are not familiar with Poles, call them Pan (Mr) or Pani (Ms). | YES/NO |
| Dropping the Mr or Ms and using only such titles as Director, President, or professions (Waiter, Driver, Cashier) is taken as impolite behaviour. | YES/NO |
| <i>Bruderschaft</i> is something like a fraternal toast. | YES/NO |

9 Try to create your own critical incident on the basis of your or someone's experience with acculturation and culture shock. Present it to the other students.

UNIT 6

Working in a multicultural team

Future managers, people working abroad and students studying abroad will have to carry out their goals through multicultural teams. Performance of multicultural teams can be examined from an intercultural communication perspective as the diverse team structure presents benefits and helps develop products and services. Communicating effectively is the biggest challenge for multicultural teams because communication styles differ across cultures.



Picture 1

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=Team+working+pictures>

1 Analyze the following critical incidents and find their most probable reasons. Then try to give your own explanation related to the dialogues.

Differences underlying culture values can be reflected in dialogues in various work situations. The first dialogue involves a US American and a Hispanic person from South America. Study the dialogue and say what went wrong in this particular situation. Take into consideration the following issues: behaviour that could be traced back to values of hierarchy, task or relationship orientation, saving face, and direct and indirect communication styles.

Try to guess the countries where the second and the third dialogues take place.

A CARL: Hey, Juan. Is everything OK?

JUAN: Yes, sir. I was just explaining to Raul here about the new machine. Some of the men aren't sure about it yet.

CARL: I know. Actually, I overheard you; what you were telling Raul isn't exactly right.

JUAN: No?

CARL: No. You have to turn on the fan before you switch on the water jet, not after. Now try it, Raul. (Pause) Yes, that's it. Any more problems with this, Juan, just come and ask me.

That's what I am here for.

JUAN: Thank you, sir.

B ALICE: I've heard your son is getting married. Congratulations.

FATMA: The wedding will be next spring.

ALICE: How nice for you. How did they meet?

FATMA: Oh, they haven't actually met yet.

C NATASHA: Excuse me, but the elevator is out of order.

SHARON: Really? Who should we talk to?

NATASHA: Talk to?

SHARON: To report it.

NATASHA: I have no idea.

SHARON: I'm sorry, I thought you lived here too.

NATASHA: But I do.

Explanation A

Explanation B

Explanation C

2 Guidance to solution - explanation of the background.

Accents and the ability to speak English have become major challenges for multicultural teams, both on-site and virtual. Many professionals state that language issues add time to team processes because patience is required to understand and communicate effectively. Language difficulties can influence conversations, which may have to be planned ahead so that messages can be conveyed accurately. Employees are recommended to develop listening

skills, to be respectful, to speak more slowly and to avoid slang or idioms. Some companies even offer English-language training that focuses on reducing accents.

Leadership styles also vary. In the United States, for example, leaders generally adopt a more egalitarian style with people free to express their opinions and disagree. In other cultures, such as those in Asia and the Middle East, leaders have a more hierarchical style when team members will generally be more subdued in expressing their opinions and will take their cues regarding decisions from the team leader. Hierarchical team members have a more formal speaking style and often wait for their turn before speaking. In contrast, in egalitarian style teams people speak over each other and interrupt on a regular basis, which can be seen as rude by people from other cultures.

To contribute to getting to know each other better within the team, multicultural team professionals send out short e-mails for a variety of cultural holidays, providing a paragraph on the significance of the holiday and a link to a web site with more information. These efforts have been successful in bringing employees together and increasing mutual understanding. Effective cross-cultural training for employees and managers is also significantly helping companies to create high-functioning teams that are able to produce better products and business solutions, understand and serve customers, and show respect for other cultures.

It is obvious that the opportunity to learn about other cultures creates an important business advantage. By increasing awareness of cultural richness, managers create an atmosphere in which all employees feel valued. The similar things can happen during students' Erasmus mobilities, when international students have to work in teams on some tasks and they must have the basic knowledge about the rules of effective team working in their target cultures.

3 You are a consultant hired by a team of foreigners who are going to do business for the first time in your country or in a country you know well. Prepare some advice to give to your client. Use the following topics:

-
- Use of language – addressing, formal and informal greetings
- Non-verbal signals – handshaking, gestures, eye- contact, personal space, silence
- Business negotiations – punctuality, negotiating styles
- Socializing – gift giving, eating, conversation topics

4 Individualism and collectivism are culture dimensions connected with the concept of identity. They can have important impact on the style of team working. Individualistic cultures emphasize the "I" identity and collectivistic cultures emphasize the "we" identity, which is a fundamental difference between Western and Eastern cultures.

There are only six countries in the Geert Hofstede’s research that have individualism as their highest dimension: USA (91), Australia (90), United Kingdom (89), Netherlands and Canada (80), and Italy (76). The high individualism ranking for the United States indicates a society with a more individualistic attitude and relatively loose *bonds* with others.

In individualistic cultures, people tend to be verbally direct. They value communication openness, learn to self disclose, like to be clear, *straightforward*, and contribute to a positive management climate, while in collectivistic group-oriented cultures, indirect communication is preferred because the image of group harmony is essential. In Western cultures, talking is very therapeutic; in Asian cultures, including Japanese culture, there is an emphasis on observing and reflecting about the process. It is rare in Asian cultures to have an open conflict, because it appears to disrupt group harmony.

Find out about your target culture in terms of the mentioned culture dimension and give information to other students.

5 Gift giving is important part of working internationally. Complete the following passage using any suitable words and add your comments based on your experiences. Find out what kind of gift is acceptable in your target culture.

Corporate gift giving can be an integral part of doing business in some countries, but it is necessary to know the specific _____. In China, for example, a clock means bad luck or death. You also cannot expect that Chinese people will _____ your gift. Giving knives in Italy, Russia and Argentina can signify cutting off the relationship and lead to _____ in establishing a deal. Giving flowers is another possible difficulty. In England, Australia and Canada some people see _____ as a symbol of death while in Germany yellow and white chrysanthemums could be seen this way.

6 Socializing and eating is important part of working and studying internationally. The following information is related to table manners in different countries. Match the country to the manner.

Germany, Korea, Poland, Spain, Taiwan

- These people say “Thank you” at the end of a meal to thank for the company.
- It is a good manner for a man to enter a restaurant before a woman.
- It is bad luck to leave chopsticks sticking vertically out of the bowl.
- In this country dinner is eaten late - not until 9 or 10 p.m.
- When drinking wait for someone to pour your drink.

7 Sometimes, members of multicultural teams are not Christians, but people of different denominations. What kind of food prohibitions connected with food do you have to remember about when you want to invite them to dinner? Use the following clues:

alcohol., beef, fasting, fish, food prohibitions, halal, kosher, pork, seafood

Muslims _____

Jews _____

Another denomination according to your choice _____

8 Match the ingredients with the name of the country.

- 1 corn tortillas, black beans, rice, salsa
- 2 spaghetti, tomato sauce, Parmesan cheese
- 3 sea food, sushi, rice, sake
- 4 barbecued chicken breast, potatoes, mayonnaise, onion, peppers, corn
- 5 spinach, peppers, oil, onion, rice, chapati (wheat bread)
- 6 wheat pasta, carrots, zucchini, peppers, chickpeas, lamb
- 7 meat balls, beef or lamb, cucumber, tomato, pepper, parsley
- 8 dumplings, pork, sauerkraut
- 9 bigos, sausages, beetroot
- 10 reindeer or moose meat, Karelian cake, turnip, lingonberries

- a Japan
- b the Czech Republic

- c Turkey
- d Morocco
- e Mexico
- f Italy
- g the U.S.A.
- h Poland
- i Finland
- j India

**9 Study eating habits of your target culture and give information to other students.
Write a paragraph.**

UNIT 7

Intercultural negotiating

As the world becomes increasingly connected, people both at home and in travels abroad, must consider the important issue of intercultural negotiation. All cultures have their own preferred styles and strategies for dealing with and managing conflict. However, it is quite difficult to be culture-specific when discussing how to deal effectively with cross-cultural conflicts. Different attitudes to solving tasks are shown in the joke below.



Picture 1

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=Team+working+pictures>

1 Study the following critical incident and try to give a proper explanation. Use the following clues: *mutual trust, relationship development, change things according to circumstances, renegotiate parts of contract, secondary importance.*

After extremely long negotiations, the US delegation was pleased to see that the contract for a new joint venture project with their Chinese partners was ready to be signed. They were particularly impressed that the Chinese had invited local dignitaries to the signing ceremony. Everything went smoothly until work on the new factory was supposed to begin. It was found that the Chinese were not following the conditions laid down in the contract, and had even suggested further negotiations.

Explanation

2 Read the following cultural joke, make comments about connection of the text to the negotiating process, and try to complete the output related to other nationalities.

A group of people meet at the National Geographic Society in London and decide that, for the next meeting, everybody has to present a treatise on the elephant. They all return the following year and present their volumes. Here are different national attitudes.



Picture 2

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=Team+working+pictures>

The German has a 700-page dissertation: “Beschreibung des männlichen Elephanten in Ost-Afrika.”1.Teil(description of the male elephant of East Africa, Part I). The Englishman has a small, sober, black leather-bound book entitled “Elephants I have shot”. The American has an 8-page booklet in colour, “How to make bigger and better elephants”, The Frenchman has a small tastefully presented book on “L'amour des éléphants “ (“The love life of elephants”). The Pole presents a book called “The elephant and its Relation to the Polish Problem”, The Swede has a greyish book called “Elefanter och hur man titulerar dem” (“Elephants and how to address them”). The Dane presents a book of recipes: “Elefant på 100 måder (‘100 ways to cook an elephant’), The Norwegian has a book entitled “Norge og vi nordmænd (‘Norway and we Norwegians’).”

People in my culture would create _____

 _____.

3 Successful intercultural negotiators are always familiar with the fact that people do, feel, think and behave differently, while at the same time, they are equally logical and rational. Individuals, groups, communities, organizations and even nation states possess diverse values, beliefs and assumptions that make sense from their own perspective. A successful international negotiator understands that difference is not threatening, but it is positive, when the differences are managed properly.



Picture 3
 Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=Team+working+pictures>

Match the following crucial phenomena in negotiating to their explanations.

- A ABILITY TO EXPRESS ONE’S OWN IDEAS
- B EMPATHY
- C ABILITY TO DEMONSTRATE ADVANTAGES
- D SENSITIVITY
- E ABILITY TO MANAGE STRESS AND COPE WITH AMBIGUITY

1 To be able to see the world as other people see it. To understand the behavior of others from their perspectives.

2 To understand what one proposes so that counterparts in the negotiation will be willing to change their positions.as well as unpredictable demands.

3 To be sure that the people with whom one negotiates will be able to objectively and fully understand the objectives and intentions at stake.

4 To get familiar with the cultural background of others along with an ability to adjust one's objectives and intentions in accordance with existing constraints and limitations.

5 To be able to deal with problems without tension.

4 Guidance to solution - explanation of the background.

People starting to work across cultures often make one of two significant mistakes. First, they assume that all of us are basically the same. In spite of our multi-pigmented skin, exotic clothing and diverse languages and practices, we all have identical wants and desires and similar approaches to negotiations and conflict resolution. Those who assert the basic similarity of cultures assume that if "we can just communicate", all problems will evaporate.

The second common mistake, currently very popular, is to romanticize culture and diversity, and to treat other cultures as exotic, sacred and deserving protection from cultural imperialism. Followers of this approach often overemphasize differences between cultures, try to go native, make extreme efforts to be culturally correct and try hard to avoid unpardonable errors.

Both views of culture hold some truth - there are many similarities between cultures and cultures are unique and precious. However, each view represents an unhelpful extreme - the truth probably lies somewhere in between. Cultural differences are important factors in the success or failure of intercultural interactions, but there are also many similarities among human beings. We must accept that culture plays an important part in interactions between groups, learn how to identify cultural similarities, build upon them and develop strategies that will help to bridge the important differences.

5 The process of negotiating has steps that should be observed. Put the following stages of the negotiation process into the right chronological order.

- Relationshipbuilding
- Questioning
- Bargaining
- Concluding
- Agreeing procedure
- Options
- Bidding

6 Explain the meaning of the following important concepts.

- Conflict resolution _____
- Threatening difference _____
- Group cohesion _____
- Overemphasize differences _____
- Multi-pigmented skin _____

7 Find a student who participated in the Erasmus IP and interview him/her about experiences with negotiating in multicultural teams. Tell about it to other students.

8 Read and complete the text about Russian people on business. Try to compare their behaviour and mentality to business etiquette and the way of thinking in your culture.

decision makers, economic conditions, positive thinking, serious imperfection, specifics, subordinates

Russian business culture has its _____ and it is necessary to know that Russians deal with business problems differently. The reasons of such behaviour can be seen in the historical development of Russia.

The Russian people believe that one should hope for the best, but should always prepare for the worst. This attitude is related to the fact that the Russians have been hardened by centuries of war with her neighbours and have been facing generally tougher _____ than people in other countries. This belief reflects a mentality that is different than the Western ethos of _____, which maintains that if one keeps trying and thinks positively, good things will happen. Reactions to failure also differ. Confronted by defeat, Westerners tend to respond actively, e.g., holding meetings, organizing plans, etc. However, Russians, on the other hand, are ready for the worst-case scenario, so when it does happen, they are able to accept the worst more readily.

As a result, meetings and debates of Russian managers often exceed allotted time limits and tend to move away from their initial agendas. In the West, such an approach would be considered a _____. However, a positive characteristic of this so-called imperfection is its readiness to accept different outcomes.

Moreover, visitors to Russia must be aware of the fact that Russian business culture is hierarchical. Decision making people higher up in the hierarchy have authority over their _____. Business should be done with the _____ and not with any people who may have been sent to meet you. Russian businessmen must have the opportunity to learn their partners and their ethics personally, as personal and informal contact is an important part of doing Russian business.

9 Comment the following passage from a guide for foreign businessmen in Russia concerning vodka drinking on business.

Vodka drinking

If you are going to do business in Russia, you must be prepared for vodka drinking.

Although recently, the government has been trying to reduce the consumption of vodka by producing new brands of beer, the effect vodka drinking has had in the Russian economy is enormous. With the big changes taking place and misery for many people the life expectancy

has gone down for the male population (60), much as a result of excessive drinking, therefore nowadays it is a big social problem.

Signing a business contract is almost always followed by trying out a glass of vodka as it is a sign of Russian hospitality to share a glass of alcohol.

10 How is signing a business contract celebrated in your target culture? Write a paragraph and share information with other students.

11 Comment the following paragraph related to Russian superstitions.

Russian culture is steeped in superstitions. Some aspects apply, quite seriously, to business. Russians will joke about these superstitions, but deep down they will also take these things very seriously. As well, there are some customs and points of etiquette which foreigners should adhere to.

- Never shake hands over a threshold: it will lead to an argument
- Never put your feet up on furniture or show the soles of your feet when sitting: it is considered very rude.

12 Create your own critical incident based on your or someones' experiences with international negotiating. Share it with other students.

UNIT 8

Creating documents related to recruitment

Applying for a job varies across national cultures and within different areas of business. The approach made in an advertising agency, for example, might not be suitable for applying for a job in a bank or another place. Therefore, submitting a portfolio of documents that involves a suitable CV and a covering letter, and various questionnaires that your prospective employer might ask you for is a very important part of the recruitment process.



Picture 1

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=Team+working+pictures>

1 The potential Erasmus students should also be aware of different approaches to numerous issues during their study abroad. The following critical incident presents a situation which a Czech student during her study in the USA had to face. Study the critical incident and then answer the questions.

Monika Petrovská, a student from the Czech Republic, won a scholarship to go to an American university. She was very excited about going to the United States and did a lot of reading about American culture. Before her arrival to the United States, Monika had read several books about America, its people and its culture. Despite her preparation, however, several confusing and frustrating incidents occurred during her first weeks in the United States.

Monika stayed up all night long writing a term paper for her psychology class. Next morning, during her Spanish class the teacher unexpectedly announced that they were going to have a test on the material they had covered in the last two classes. Monika was afraid that she was going to fail it as she neither had done her homework nor had reviewed the material from the previous class. John, Monika's friend from the tennis club and also a classmate in Spanish, seemed to be unconcerned about the test. During it, Monika was asking John for the answers to the questions she was not sure of. However, John seemed to be annoyed by her questions and did not want to share his answers. Monika's feelings were hurt. To make the matter worse, the teacher, having seen what Monika was doing, asked her to hand in her incomplete test and to leave the class.

Questions:

What motivated Monika to act the way she did?

- A. Monika expected John to help her out during the test because she considered him her friend.
- B. Monika wanted John to help her with the quiz because she was selfish and wanted to get a good grade no matter what.

C. Monika expected John to help her out during the test because she was a woman.

What attitudes or values appear to be important in the Czech society based on Monica's actions?

- A. Friends are supposed to stick together in their battle against authority. Teachers are considered to be such authority.
- B. Men are supposed to help women in all situations.
- C Students always work on their tests together as a team.

Why do you think John behaved the way he did?

- A He did not want to help Monika because he considered her as competition in his Spanish class.
- B. He did not like Monika as a person and did not want to help her out during the test
- C.He liked Monika as a person but did not want to help her cheat on the test as he considered it morally wrong.

What attitudes or values appear to be important in the American society based on John and the teacher's behavior?

- A. It is considered unacceptable to ask for help.
- B. Students never help each other in class no matter how much they like each other.
- C. Cheating on tests is considered unacceptable and wrong. It may lead to academic dismissal. Students are supposed to get grades for what they know and not what they have copied from someone else's paper.

What could have been done differently to avoid this cross-cultural misunderstanding?

2 Study the following CV and write your own one according to the same structure.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Susan Farolan
85 Nottingham Road
Loughborough LH4 8SD
Great Britain
Phone 0131 776 0972

E-mail sufar@not.net

Picture 2

Available from:

<https://www.google.cz/search?q=Team+working+pictures>



EDUCATION

2001-2012 London Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Diploma in Public Relations
1997-2000 Loughborough University
B.A. (Honours) in Journalism and Media Studies
1992-1996 Sutherland School
A levels in German (A), History (B), English (A) and Geography (C)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2002– present Public Relations Officer, English Nature Trust
Responsible for researching and writing articles, ensuring their distribution to the press

Summers of 2000 and 1999 The Tribune Newspaper, arranging and conducting interviews

SKILLS

IT Office 2003 and Windows, Excel, Internet, Powerpoint
Languages Fluent German
Additional Driving licence (car and motorcycle)

ACTIVITIES

Cross- country skiing and swimming
Secretary of the local branch of an association Sport –activities for disabled people

REFERENCES

Peter Jenkins	Jane Bronholm
Professor of Journalism	Sports Editor
Loughborough University	The Tribune

3 Study the following covering letter accompanying a CV for the position of a guide. Using the suitable phrases, write your covering letter applying for an Erasmus stay at a university.

Dear Mr. Mayer,

In reply to your advertisement which appeared in the Travel Gazette of June 15, 2014, I would like to apply for a post of a tour guide.

As you will see from the enclosed CV, although I am relatively inexperienced, I have successfully completed a course in tour guiding as well as two courses in French and German

languages on tourism (intermediate level). I have also escorted visitors to the school around our local area.

I feel I can offer enthusiasm and dedication to your company as I am hard-working and reliable and would very much like to gain greater work experience.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Rose



add your name
add your address
add your contact details

add date

add employer name
add employer address

Position: (add position)
Reference number: (add job reference number)

Dear (add employer name),

I am writing with reference to your advertisement in the (add the place where you saw the job the advertisement) regarding the post of (add post).

As you can see from my attached CV (add qualifications, and summary of experience).

(add more details pertaining to your application).

I am entirely at your disposition and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely/faithfully. (NB: sincerely - if you know the name of the recipient. faithfully - if you don't know the name of the recipient)

(add your name)

Picture 3

Available from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/business>

4 Read the following specifics related to recruitment in the United Kingdom and the USA. Compare the data to the situation in the Czech Republic and find similar information about rules in your target culture.

- Details of your family (your parents) are not normally necessary as the employer is much more interested in what you have done and can do, rather than your family background.
- Photographs should not be included unless specifically asked for because of equal opportunity programmes in companies indicating that they do not want to discriminate anyone on the basis of colour of the applicant's skin.
- In some companies, the candidates are even asked not to include any indication of their gender to ensure that there is no sexual discrimination.
- Hobbies and leisure time activities are seen as relevant because they tell the employer about the applicant's personality. Involvement in a football team, for example, can indicate that the candidate is able to work in a team. However, it is recommended not to include too many hobbies and activities.

5 Public speaking, especially preparing a presentation, is an important skill in communicating knowledge and expressing ideas to groups of people. It is a primary medium for presenting and selling products and ideas. Nowadays, delivering an effective presentation is difficult as listeners have better access to information on the internet and they expect presentations delivered with animation and humour. Common questions asked before preparing a presentation usually include the issues related to the goal of the speech, starting a speech, deciding about a good structure (3 parts) and getting information about the audience.

Think of a presentation related to your target culture you are going to prepare and fill in the following chart that will help you to have its clear structure and to get a feeling of confidence.

<i>Introduction:</i>
Headline:
Plan:
<i>Main Body:</i>
Point One:
1.
2.
3.
Point Two:
1.
2.
3.
Point Three:

1.
2.
3.
<i>Conclusion:</i>
1. Summary
2. Echo:

Picture 4
Source: own processing

6 When travelling to your target country, you can face several difficulties that can have a serious impact on your health condition because of being in contact with ill people. Read the following text related to the EBOLA virus. Complete the missing words.

Consultancy, diarrhoea, fatal, outbreak, saliva

Ebola virus disease is a _____ viral disease that affects humans and wild animals like monkeys, gorillas and chimpanzees.

After the incubation period – usually 8-10 days – some symptoms as high fever, headache, joint and muscle pain, weakness, _____, vomiting and abdominal pain can be observed.

The disease is transmitted through direct contact with blood or body fluids, like sweat, _____ and sperm of an infected person or contact with living or dead wild animal or their raw or undercooked meat. Transmission risk is higher in forestry areas, local bazaars, and healthcare facilities.

Ebola virus disease _____ still goes on in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria. Congo, Gabon, South Sudan, Ivory Coast, Uganda, South Africa and Mali are also places where some cases were reported in the past.

People returning from the mentioned areas should monitor their health. It is necessary to immediately apply to a health centre if you suffer from fever, shivering, muscle pain, nausea, skin eruption or red eyes. You have to inform your doctor about potential disease contacts _____ services are provided by each country’s health service.

7 The course you are finishing must be evaluated from the point of view of the students and the teacher. Below, you can find a set of questions helping to assess your progress in the course. Study them and write at least sentences in each answer.

QUESTIONS:

1 What new culture-related issues did you learn?

2 Which cultures represented in the course were similar to your home culture and which were different?

3 What was the most difficult for you during the course?

4 How did your knowledge of English improve? What new English words and phrases did you learn?

5 Do you now feel more ready to solve problems in the team in the future?

6 Why, or why not?

7 What things did you know well, which issues were new, what things were not useful for you?

8 What was your position in the group?

9 What was your relationship to other members of the group?

10 Did you have any difficulties with any members of your team or the teacher?

11 How did you solve them?

12 What is the general contribution of the course to your education and the prospective stay in your target culture?

8 Fill in the questionnaires listed in the appendix – they present part of the portfolio of documents together with your CV and a covering letter.

REVISION

LIST OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS RELATED TO THE OUTPUT OF THE COURSE

Acculturation

Adaptation

Addressing

Culture shock

Discrimination

Femininity

Haptics

Hierarchy

Home culture

Job interview

Masculinity

Mimics

Monochrony

Multiculturality

Negotiating

Prejudice

Polychrony

Power distance

Portfolio

Proxemics

Recruitment

Religion

Reverse culture shock

Stereotype

Symptom

Target culture

Team

Values

Vocalics

INTERCULTURAL TESTS

Source:

Available from: <https://www.google.cz/search?q=INCA>

I During intercultural interactions you should be prepared for meeting people coming from a completely different cultural background. Try to solve the following quiz related to Arabic and Japanese cultures whose specific culture phenomena may be surprising for the Europeans.

2 Religion has an impact on almost everyone in the Arabian culture. T F

3 Gifts should be opened in the presence of the giver. T F

3 Japanese tend to reward individual achievement. T F

4 Seniority is important and highly respected in Japan.. T F

5 Most Japanese are not concerned with losing face. T F

6 Most times when a Japanese says “Yes”, he is confirming his agreement. T F

7 In a group situation, the Japanese usually use silent periods to sense others’ feelings and thoughts. T F

8 The majority of Japanese managers like a private office with a family picture on the wall T F

9 Japanese predominantly value

- Long working hours
- Confrontations
- Inner harmony
- Social recognition.

10 Japanese value a foreign partner who is

- A specialist in new technology
- Aggressive
- Compromising, friendly and in harmony
- Able to make a decision by himself.

11 Japanese society may seem reluctant in dealing with foreigners because

- They hate foreign people historically
- They think they are superior to foreign people
- They are embarrassed
- Most foreigners do not speak Japanese.

12 While meeting with a Japanese company manager on business, when he was asked to make some minor decision, he said he could not answer until tomorrow because

- He needs the consensus of his department members
- He is not qualified to answer
- Japanese are not decisive people
- This is a typical Japanese negotiation technique.

II Solve the following intercultural tests about international negotiating.

- 1) At the end of your negotiations with a Chinese firm, the negotiation team suddenly demands you drop your prices or they may have to pull out of any agreement. What should you do?
 - a) Stand firm. They are merely trying to test your resolve and gain some last minute concessions.
 - b) Ask for time to speak to your superiors.
 - c) Agree. The Chinese would not do so unless there is a good reason due to the need to save 'face'
- 2) During intense negotiations the Russian negotiation team keep pressing you on a particular point you absolutely cannot budge on. You have politely indicated your position to no avail. They are insistent. Which of these options would be most advisable?
 - a) Keep politely insisting on your conditions. The Russians will eventually understand.
 - b) Drag your negotiation team out of the room dramatically. The Russians will then appreciate concessions on this point are unlikely.
 - c) Concede slightly. The Russians will then feel they have gained some sort of concession and move on.
- 3) Upon being met at the office of a potential Indonesian client you are met with very personal questions about your job, education and salary. Why?
 - a) These questions are just part of the getting to know you process.
 - b) These questions are meant to establish your rank.
 - c) These questions are thought to be of importance in your own country, so are being asked out of politeness.
- 4) When meeting with the French in a business environment, which of these is best to avoid?
 - a) Personal questions
 - b) Eye contact
 - c) Formal demeanour
- 5) During negotiations in Japan you try to confirm a point by asking. Do you not want this added to the agreement? You are answered with a 'yes', so you keep it within

the agreement. At a later date you find the Japanese are upset that this was added to the agreement. Why?

- a) The Japanese answer positively to negative questions, so they actually meant 'no'.
 - b) "Yes' can sometimes mean 'maybe'. In this case the Japanese team wanted to think about it so answered 'yes' meaning, 'let us think about it and check with us at the next meeting'."
 - c) "The Japanese assumed you knew they did not want it to form part of the agreement, and answered 'yes', meaning 'yes you are right in thinking we do not want it within the agreement'."
- 6) Your company has been negotiating with a company in Argentina for 3 months. The next round of negotiations is set to be the final meeting, with all sides aiming for an agreement. The negotiator that had been dealing with Argentina is taken ill and cannot travel. A replacement is briefed and sent to clinch the deal. He returns empty handed. Why?
- a) The Argentine companies were simply offended because they assumed your company was not taking the corporate relationship seriously by sending in a new negotiator.
 - b) In Argentina personal relationships are valued more than corporate ones. The negotiations failed because the new negotiator was unknown.
 - c) "In Argentina, the belief is that if illness gets in the way of a bad omen

III QUESTIONNAIRE

Guidelines: Biographical information

This is a short questionnaire that helps each individual assessee to reflect on his potential for developing intercultural skills based on his personal background.

The questions are included in the INCA Portfolio and can be consulted at any time.

The questionnaire helps the assessor obtain background information on the assessee and his experiences to date, and places the assessment results from each exercise into the appropriate context.

Objective of the exercise:

The assessee reflects on his personal background; the assessor gains valuable information about the assessee.

Dimensions tested:

None

The questionnaire provides information on the assessee's intercultural experiences to date, his language skills and time spent abroad either for professional or personal reasons, etc.

Technical requirements, necessary material:

Questionnaire

Depending on the available infrastructure, the questionnaire can be filled out on the computer at INCA On-line or printed out to be completed in the pencil and paper version.

Duration: ca. 15 min

Preparation and administration:

Hand out the questionnaire or provide the assessees with access to INCA On-line by giving them their own username and password. The questionnaire can be filled out at the assessment centre itself, at home or even at work.

Assessee:

Assessor:

Exercise: Questionnaire Biographical information

Date:

Page 1

Biographical information

Name:

Age:

Profession/Studies:

Company/University:

How many years have you worked for your company?

Citizenship:

The rest of this information will provide a first overview of your intercultural contacts and experiences.

How many friends from abroad do you have?

How many languages do you speak well?

Where and how did you learn these languages?

How often have you dealt with people from other countries in your professional life?

Have you ever worked in a work group with members from various cultures?

How often do you read books that are written in foreign languages?

How often have you been abroad?

0–2 times 3–5 times 6–10 times more than 10 times

Which countries have you been to?

Assessee:

Assessor:

Exercise: Questionnaire Biographical information

Date:

Page 2

How often have you been abroad while carrying out your job?

How long did your longest stay abroad last?

- one or two days 2 days–1 week 1 week–1 month 1–5 months
 more than half a year

How many different countries have you visited already?

- 0–1 2–3 4–6 more than 7

Additional intercultural experiences:

Assessee:

Assessor:

Exercise: Questionnaire Intercultural Profile

Date:

Page 1

Intercultural profile

It is certain that you will have experienced many situations where you have had contact with people from other cultures, for example at your workplace, in your country, or in other countries. You will find below some statements that are related to such situations. Please tick those statements that are valid for you and that best describe your experiences.

Maybe these statements are related to situations that you have not yet experienced. Please try to imagine such a situation and tick those situations that correspond best to your possible behaviour and reaction.

Through this questionnaire you can record your own behaviour and past experience. The questionnaire is supposed to give you feedback on your strengths and weaknesses in this area of intercultural competence.

Example:

'In the supermarket I prefer to buy products from abroad.'

Not applicable maybe fully applicable



This section is about encounters with other people in your home country

	not applicable	maybe	fully applicable
1. In restaurants I often eat dishes with ingredients that I don't know.			
2. I often seek contact with other people in order to learn as much as possible about their culture.			
3. When other people don't feel comfortable in my presence, I notice it.			
4. I find it difficult to adapt to people from diverse origins.			
5. When other people behave in a way that I don't understand, I ask them why they are doing this.			
6. When I hear about a catastrophe happening in another country I think about the people there and their fate.			
7. When I am a newcomer in a group with people from a different country, I try to find out the rules in this group by observing their behaviour.			
8. When a conversation with people from different countries fails, I ask all persons involved to explain their positions.			
9. When conversation partners use gestures and expressions that are unknown to me, I ignore them.			
10. When talking to other people I always watch their body language.			
11. In conversations with speakers of other languages I avoid unclear or ambiguous words.			

Now we deal with situations where you meet people in their home country (e.g. when on holiday in other countries and cultures)

	not applicable	maybe	fully applicable
12. I get confused when there are no reliable transport timetables in the country where I spend my holiday.			
13. When I observe people in other countries, I often guess how they are feeling.			
14. I often change my plans when I am on holiday abroad.			
15. When the behaviour of people from other cultures alienates me, I avoid making contact with them.			

The following statements are related to work situations with colleagues from different cultural backgrounds.

	not applicable	maybe	fully applicable
16. I don't have problems in suddenly changing to one of my other languages during a conversation.			
17. I always follow the rules of my own culture if I am not sure of how to behave properly when dealing with people from other cultures.			
18. When colleagues from other cultures in my work group come to work later and/or take longer breaks, I adopt their work habits.			
19. If I have behaved inappropriately towards a colleague from another culture, I think of how to compensate for it without further hurting him.			
20. When there are colleagues in my work area who constitute an ethnic minority, I try to involve them in the majority group.			
21. When colleagues or superiors from abroad criticise my work, I consider changing my work habits accordingly.			

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