Who We Are: Cultural Considerations

Mrs. Bingen taught us a lot in the fourth grade that was beyond reading, writing, and arithmetic, such as how to answer the telephone, how to introduce ourselves to someone new, how to introduce a friend to another friend, and so on. The lesson on how to shake hands stuck with me: "When you hold out your right hand, squeeze the other person's hand firmly. That shows that you are strong and confident." All my life I have practiced this lesson. And when I have shaken hands with someone who did not respond with a firm grip, I secretly wanted to teach that person the right way to do it.

> *Strangers in a new culture see only what they know.*
> —**ANONYMOUS**

A different lesson waited for me on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, where I was volunteering during the summer several years ago. Larry Peterson, a Presbyterian minister, had lived on the reservation with the Lakota Sioux for twenty some years and he had become the cultural interpreter for our group.

One night Larry told us about a time when he took several young Native Americans to a church function in a neighboring town. On their way home, the children complained about their aching hands. They explained to Larry that they dreaded shaking hands with "those church people" because of their "hard handshakes." The children viewed these handshakes as aggressive. As they explained to him, "You should offer your hand with no resistance, so that others will know that you come in peace." Here was a surprising lesson for me on the differences among cultures. For many years, I had assumed there was but one way to shake hands—the *right* way—which just happened to be my way. I was startled to realize that others who had a different approach were equally logical in their own reasoning.

My summer visit to the reservation gave me a taste of how our cultural differences shape our worldviews, and how those views direct our behaviors. Larry had moved to the reservation with his own European-American upbringing and its set of cultural norms. But he was unaware of many of these norms and beliefs until he lived among people who did not think the way that he did. When he arrived, an elder of the tribe said to him, "If you are not going to be here at least twenty years, it's just not worth it." Not enough time, in other words, to get to know him and for him to get to know them. Clearly, this was a different sense of time than Larry held.

Another story from Larry concerns a young member of the Lakota, who was away at college in California. He received a phone call; his grandfather was seriously ill. Without question, the young man left school to attend to his dying grandfather. Family was the most important thing in his life, and there would be no missing this last chance to be with someone so important to him. Larry reflected on his experience as a young man, away at college many years earlier. His mother called; his grandfather was facing death. But his mother reassured Larry, "Your grandfather knows how much you love him, and knows how important your studies are to your future. Stay at school and finish your exams. You can come home to mourn with us later, even if you miss the funeral." Those cultural differences in values can play out in the workplace as well, in the ways a manager and his staff face difficult decisions.

Culture Defined

Culture is generally thought of as an integrated pattern of human knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors that characterize a group of people—the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group. The continuance of a group's culture depends on the group's capacity for learning and transmitting its knowledge to succeeding generations. Generally, a group's culture consists of unwritten rules about how its members (however they identify themselves) do things.

These rules vary from group to group. How a family expresses affection—or doesn't; how children address adults; how people in the neighborhood drive their cars or view law enforcement—these are just a few of the subtle, day-to-day interactions that teach us what is important in life and how people should treat one another. These rules and values are not formally taught. We acquire them as we grow up, as we learn and practice interactions within the group. The values we embrace may be defined by where we were born, where we live now, our educational background, our religion, and our gender, race, or ethnic group, to name a few factors.

Consider This

☑ List as many cultural groups as you can that form your identity. (Consider where you were born, where you were raised, your family's heritage, your sex, your sexual orientation, your religious beliefs, your level of education and where you went to school, your ethnicity.)

We Are Products of Our Groups

Each of us belongs to several groups that help to define the rules of life we understand and live by. This makes it difficult to make broad general statements about how this person or that person will behave in a given situation. For example, I was born in the American (U.S.) South and I have a Southern accent. But my father was in the army and we moved around quite a bit, so the assumptions of my cousins, who grew up in the South, are not the same as mine, though we may sound alike. An Asian woman who was raised in San Francisco may look very much like someone raised in Taiwan, but her cultural experiences, and hence her atti-

tudes and beliefs, will be quite different. That said, there are tendencies and preferences that can help us understand some of the differences between us.

Inevitably, in the workplace these cultural differences meet one another and sometimes clash. These differences can unconsciously shape the preconceptions we have of each other, and may create conflicts. They also may inform opposing ideas about how to approach addressing those conflicts. Similarly, our cultural differences can create distrust. What you have done or said may make perfect sense in your worldview, in your understanding of what is important and your perception of how people should behave toward one another. In a workplace exchange, my reaction to what you have done—because I don't see the world exactly the way you do—may be confusion or bewilderment, or even anger. In my view, you have not met an expectation, or have broken a commitment—even an assumed expectation or commitment. We have never talked about our cultural expectations and differences, often because we didn't even know what they were.

. . . .

When Cynthia was growing up, the house was very quiet in the mornings. Family members got up, got ready for the day, and went on their way, being careful not to disturb their father, whom they all knew as someone to be avoided until at least noon. Angelo's house growing up was a bright, noisy place from morning until night. When he came down to breakfast, everyone said good morning. It was the accepted way to start the day.

Cynthia became Angelo's boss. When she came to work, she walked past Angelo's desk, straight to her own office every day. It never occurred to her to interrupt her own thinking to say "Good morning." Over the months that they worked together, Angelo watched Cynthia walk by his desk each morning and continued to wait for, to expect, Cynthia to greet him like, in his mind, "any civilized person would." Angelo put many interpretations on Cynthia's behavior: that she didn't like him, that he was not doing a good job, that she was cold and unfriendly. When Angelo final-

ly told Cynthia how her behavior affected him, she was taken aback. It never occurred to her that he would react negatively to what seemed to her to be normal behavior.

. . . .

A Caution

Be careful: The temptation to generalize is strong. If we can fit people into neat models and boxes, they can seem much easier to manage: "You know how those Italians are," or "Of course, she's a woman. You know how they overreact"; or "[insert group] always does [insert stereotype]." Remember, culture does not account for all of the differences among people in the workplace. Sometimes the differences between people within a given culture may be greater than the differences between groups! With that caveat in mind, the next time you find yourself in a confusing situation, ask yourself how your own cultural assumptions may be shaping your reactions, and try to see the world from the other's point of view.

. . . .

When I walked into the meeting room, I could feel the tension among this team of managers. The conflicts between them had been brewing for some time. In this first meeting, I could see and hear the cultural differences: the manager was from India, one team member was African American, two appeared to be European American, and one described himself as "born in Iran, lived in India as a child." What impact did their cultural differences have on the conflicts before them? I was never exactly certain how this belief or that worldview created the situation in which they now found themselves, though I knew that they were dealing with differences that were probably deep and wide. My work, as I saw it, was to understand and respect their differences rather than label their attitudes.

. . . .

While volumes have been written on culture and cultural differences, our intention here is to highlight a few of the ways that cultural

differences impact disagreement and resolution in the workplace. With this information, you can begin to develop an understanding of the impact of these differences.

Culture Examined

Many authors have created models for understanding the dimensions of culture as a way of better understanding the differences among us. In the 1970s, Geert Hofstede, a sociologist from Belgium, worked with IBM at its facilities around the world. Though the corporate culture of the company is the same wherever its offices are, he saw that the workers in different locations held different attitudes about how they worked together. From his extensive research, he developed country-by-country assessments of beliefs and values that shape workplace behavior.[1]

Based on his experience with the Hopi and the Navajo, and then his travels in Europe and Asia, Edward T. Hall popularized the concepts of "high-context" and "low-context" cultures in his book *Beyond Culture*.[2] High-context cultures are more collectivist—that is, people view their relationship to the group as very important; reliance on nonverbal communication is high. In general, cultures in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, or indigenous groups in the United States are in this high-context category. Those in low-context cultures are more individualist—that is, individuals make choices and decisions with little concern for what is important to the group. Generally, in the United States and Western Europe, the individual is seen as the most important component of society. Though most people in modern society have some experience with both of these modes, these different worldviews play out in myriad ways in our approaches to conflict and in our communication styles.

In yet another model, Craig Storti, in his lively workshops on "Communicating Across Cultures" for the U.S. Department of State, uses several dimensions of cultural difference to help people identify the various preferences that they have as individuals and as members of particular cultures.[3] He calls these the locus of control, concepts of rightness and fairness, management style, attitude toward uncertainty, and communication styles.

As we explore the ways that culture shapes our belief systems and our behaviors, bear in mind that there are many ways to look at, listen

for, and understand these differences. In an argument or debate, some groups often refer to authorities or experts to legitimize points; for others, their own experience is more persuasive and convincing. In short, it is a cultural thing, learned within the group one was raised. So, we arrive at our truths from different directions, each convinced that *our* way of understanding is the *correct* way.

My own European-American view of time is linear. This is so deeply ingrained in me that when I read of other groups, for whom the construct of "past, present, and future" has no meaning, I cannot wrap my brain around their perspective, no matter how much I try. In another example, for some cultural groups time is of the essence. Punctuality is important. To be late for a meeting is an insult to others. But for other cultural groups, time is a much more fluid concept. The intention to meet is what is important, the designated time is approximate. "Let's meet at 10:00" has two very different interpretations, though each assumes that the communication is clearly understood by the other.

A missionary working in Germany once told me of her experience of Germans and Ghanaians meeting together at a local church. In the Ghanaians' view, church started as you were preparing to go to the service, stopping at neighbors' homes to gather them up and bring them with you. For the Germans, church started at 11 A.M., whether you were in the building or not. As she related this story to me, by the time the Ghanaians arrived, the German service was almost over.

Another worldview difference that has a dramatic impact on our life choices and expectations in the workplace is the view of destiny. In some groups, there is a strong belief that one controls one's own destiny. Yet other groups hold the view that fate and external forces control where people are and what they can expect. We see this in disagreements ranging from the workplace to the community to the political arena. "Pick yourself up by your own bootstraps" runs smack into "It is my lot in life."

Five Dimensions of Cultural Difference

To give us more of an understanding of the nature of culture, let us examine five common dimensions of cultural difference: communication, tolerance for uncertainty, power, identity, and time.

Communication: Direct or Indirect

How do we talk to one another? This ranges from direct to indirect. Those on the direct end of the spectrum speak what is on their minds. Their preference is to tell the truth (as they see it) rather than spare another's feelings. Communication is strictly about the transfer of information. Yes means yes. No means no. Those on the indirect side prefer to show more deference to the group or other individual, likely to spare feelings or to preserve harmony. Their speech may be hesitant, slow, or quiet. "I was thinking maybe if you had time for lunch, we could.…" "I don't know about this, but I think.…" In this indirect pattern of speaking, there is a rising intonation at the end of every statement, making each sentence sound like a question. The emphasis is on building relationships.

In cultures where indirect communication is the norm, people have many ways to say no without ever saying no. They use phrases like "I think so," "Probably," "We'll look into it," "We'll see," "Maybe." All these can mean no without using the word *no*. Harmony is preserved by avoiding being definitive or using what may sound like a harsh negative. In individualistic or low-context cultures, however, people tend to be verbally direct. They value communication openness, are willing or eager to self-disclose, and prefer clear, straightforward communication. In low-context cultures, direct approaches are seen to contribute to a positive management climate. In collectivist or high-context cultures, indirect communication is preferred because the image of group harmony is essential.[4]

In the United States, directness is often seen as the dominant or preferred style in the workplace. In her book *Talking from 9 to 5*, Deborah Tannen, who once said, "communication between genders is cross cultural," explores the differences between the direct style and the indirect style as it is experienced between men and women, as well as between national cultures.[5] In Tannen's book, as well as in Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers*,[6] the problems that sometimes result from indirect communication styles can be life-threatening. Both authors cite airplane-cockpit dialog that led to airplane crashes.

Gladwell, for example, describes a disastrous interaction involving a Columbian co-pilot, the airplane pilot (also Columbian), and the

air traffic controller in New York. Gladwell describes the incident:

> "Imagine the scene in the cockpit. The plane is dangerously low on fuel. They have just blown their first shot at a landing. They have no idea how much longer the plane is capable of flying. The Columbian co-pilot tells air traffic control 'That's right to one-eight-zero on the heading and, ah, we'll try once again. We're running out of fuel.'" Gladwell refers to this as "mitigated speech": "when we're being polite … or when we're being deferential to authority."

> The thing you have to understand about that crash is that New York air traffic controllers are famous for being rude, aggressive, bullying. . . . They handle a phenomenal amount of traffic in a very constrained environment. . . . The way they look at it, it's "I am in control. Shut up and do what I say." They will snap at you. And if you don't like what they tell you to do, you have to snap back. And then they'll say, "all right, then." But if you don't, they'll railroad you. (pp. 194–195)

It can be seductive to put our own interpretations on these style differences—to make assumptions such as, "Direct communication is more powerful," or "A person who uses indirect communication is insecure." These assumptions are not always true. The manager may give a direct and clear (not necessarily harsh) message: "Have that report on my desk by 5:00." Bosses may also communicate effectively with subordinates indirectly to accomplish tasks. "I would like to see that report before you leave today"; from the boss, this may be indirect, but the employee can still receive the intended message. On the other hand, the manager who uses indirect and unclear messages is not likely to get the needed results— for example, "How is that report going?"

  Power differences especially affect direct and indirect communication, how it is given as well as how it is received. The direct may be, "I'm going to lunch. Cover my calls." The indirect would be, "I'm going to lunch. Would you mind covering my calls?" A boss can comfortably use either the direct or the indirect style to communicate with an employee. But that same direct tone from a subordinate may not be received by the manager as acceptable because it implies an incorrect power relation-

ship between the two. Within your own organizational structure, you may talk to employees with a more direct style, and yet with your boss you will use a more indirect style. A subordinate's saying, "Get that report to me by 5:00 today" to his boss would be heard quite differently from a boss making that same statement to her employee.

Understanding how these cultural and power differences impact communication includes responding to them appropriately:

> ▶ Avoid assuming that a person who uses an indirect style is weak, or that a person who uses a direct style is domineering or arrogant.

> ▶ Manage your own style preference and modify it when appropriate.

Tolerance for Uncertainty: High or Low

How comfortable are you with taking risks—and with the possibility of failure? On the high end of the scale, some people are willing to take risks. They set up new businesses, move to a new places, question the existing rules. These people are often the early adopters of new technology, eager to take on the newest smart phones or digital equipment. Their preference is for fewer rules, and they are generally more tolerant of differences in values, opinions, and beliefs. On the low end of this scale are people who value tradition, for whom new is not necessarily better, and who feel taking a risk can be dangerous. For these people, beliefs and values are firmly held. There is *one* right answer. Rules and structures are tight.

Embracing a new career or developing a new business line or product, investing in a new venture or moving to a new town where the job market is better—these are more comfortable options for those at the high end. At the low end, maintaining traditions and respecting the rules are stronger inclinations. In the workplace, there are those who are eager to jump into new assignments, and they do so with the attitude, "I don't know how to do it, but I am eager to figure it out." Others are more cautious, with the hesitation, "I don't want to commit to doing something unless I am certain I can succeed."

Alfie (at the high end) was willing to step up and challenge the boss's ideas, even though he knew it could be risky. The boss might get upset and respond negatively. But Alfie would take the risk. "What is the worst thing the boss can say? He's not going to fire me." Some of Alfie's peers were really glad to have Alfie around. They had the same questions, but it was a lot safer to sit back and watch what happened to Alfie, then decide whether to join him or not. Alfie complained to me, "When the boss isn't around, they are all agreeing with me. Then when I say something, nobody in the meeting backs me up."

Hannah (at the low end) knew the rules. Whenever her boss proposed a new approach or procedure, she was quick to quote the manual. She knew the SOP upside down and backwards. She resisted change, and preferred to keep things as they were. When the boss announced that she would need to move her workspace, Hannah was full of questions. "Why do I have to move? Here is just fine." When I asked her what she liked about her job, she answered, "The security of it."

As a manager, you need to understand employees' differences in dealing with uncertainty, risk, and change. Try to do the following:

▶ Be responsive to their needs either for stability or for risk taking.
▶ With those on the low end of this dimension, avoid too much change when possible, provide explanation when necessary, and give advance notice.
▶ For those on the high end, provide stimulating opportunities to take on new projects.

Power: Egalitarian or Hierarchical

Who has the power or authority to make decisions, and how does that individual use that power? Of those on the egalitarian side of this scale, people expect to have some control or influence over the decisions that affect them. There is a spirit of inclusion: we are all in this together, and

everyone's voice is valued. On the hierarchical side, people expect that those with power or authority will make the decisions. The lower ranking people give deference willingly to those above them. So, this is a dimension of culture that particularly impacts management.

The egalitarian boss will engage the staff in decision making on significant policy decisions, usually through staff meetings or one-on-one conversations. For subordinates who also hold the egalitarian view, this is as it should be: "We should be consulted on these issues." For those on the hierarchical side, however, this egalitarian approach can be frustrating. These employees are often more comfortable saying, "You are the boss. Tell me what to do and I will do it." The egalitarians among us may find themselves making the same statement, but that is because they believe it is what is expected of them, though they will not be happy about it. They really want and expect to have input.

Cultures develop within organizations. I think back to my graduate program in conflict resolution; it was notorious for our vocal participation in all the decisions that the faculty made—or tried to make. But that was the culture of the program—the worldview of the students: we should have some way to participate in the decision-making process. Across campus, in other graduate programs, there was much less activism. The culture of the math and science programs or the nursing programs was more hierarchical—students read the catalog and the syllabus, and then followed the course of study as it was laid out.

Organizations have different cultures, different operating systems. A person functioning effectively within the military for twenty years has a clear understanding of the importance of hierarchy, as do all of the people she works with. When she retires and takes a job in a civilian workforce, though, she discovers that the unwritten rules are different in an egalitarian system. If she is the boss, she may have difficulty adjusting to employees who expect to negotiate assignments. Indeed, she may be frustrated by the (in her view) inefficiency of the more egalitarian approach.

As a manager, you need to understand the nature of egalitarian versus hierarchical perspectives. Consider doing the following:

▶   Allow opportunities for those who value egalitarian principles to

> provide input into decisions that may impact their workplace or responsibilities.

► Practice providing clear guidance and organizational structure for those who are more comfortable with a hierarchical approach.

Identity: Individualist or Collectivist

Is your identity defined more by your own accomplishments or by your membership in a group? Those of us on the individualist end of this spectrum make choices and decisions based on questions we ask ourselves, such as "What do I want? What do I need? What do I care about?" Those of us on the collectivist side are concerned with the good of the group, asking questions like, "What is best for the group? What does the group need or want or care about?"

> *We all know we are unique individuals, but we tend to see others as representatives of groups.*
>
> —**DEBORAH TANNEN**

This topic relates to a discussion earlier in this chapter, in regard to the concept of high- and low-context cultures. In general, we can pair the attributes of the individualist with the low-context culture, while the collectivist view is aligned with the high-context culture.

In the previous chapter, I introduced a model for considering the typical approaches to conflict resolution (Figure 5-1). Using this model, we see that those on the collectivist side often show a preference for avoidance and accommodation. They approach disagreement with high concern for the group or the other person. As reported by Stella Ting-Twomey, it is rare in Asian cultures to have open conflict because conflict appears to disrupt group harmony.[7] In contrast, in American culture, the individual is often considered the most important component of society: there is a high concern for individual rights and freedoms. Those on the individualist side are more likely to respond according to the vertical axis (high concern for self or the task at hand), in directing mode.

Looking at the diagram in this light, you can see the stereotypes that pair up with these behaviors. Individualist people on the vertical axis are often considered arrogant and egotistical; collectivists on the horizontal axis are likely be seen as weak, as pushovers. But these are stereotypes, not prescriptions; they can limit our ability to understand one another

and to appreciate the contribution that each type of person makes to a healthy workplace.

Privacy, personal space, and individual accountability are emphasized at the individualist end of the scale. In collectivist cultures, group accountability dominates. Several years ago, in responding to lessons learned from Japanese industry successes, U.S. businesses showed a strong movement to apply these collectivist lessons to teamwork in various industries. It didn't always work—the cultural change required was too great.

For example, the Library of Congress reorganized its organizational structure into teams. Previously the work had been assigned to individuals, and their performance was evaluated as individuals, based on the number of titles cataloged and quality of the work. Shifting to a team structure was a huge cultural shift for these employees; they would now be evaluated based on the productivity of the team. This created more conflict than predicted. At the implementation level, team members argued over who was carrying their weight and who wasn't, who was doing their fair share and who wasn't. Management eventually abandoned the approach, in part because of the contentions and conflicts that were created.

This dimension of individualist versus collectivist identity also helps us understand different attitudes about saving face. "Face saving" refers to the importance of maintaining a good image and the strategies we use to save face in conflicts. Those on the individualist side are most concerned with reputation, credibility, and self-respect—all related to the ego. Ting-Twomey explains that American subjects, for example, tend to adopt self-face preservation and maintenance, focus on self-face issues, use control-focused conflict strategies and confrontational strategies, and display stronger win-lose orientations. For Americans, loss of face means personal failure, loss of self-esteem, or loss of self-pride on an individual attribution basis. On the collectivist end, however, saving face is related to honor, on how the incident reflects on the family, the group, or the organization. Asian subjects tend to use face-smoothing strategies, mutual-face preservation strategies, and conflict-avoidance strategies. For Japanese and Korean subjects, loss of face means disrupting the group harmony, bringing shame to their family, classmates, or company.[8]

How might this dimension of culture play out in the workplace? As one example, consider the individualist boss who may want to recognize individual effort in order to demonstrate appreciation for a job well done. The collectivist employee may find being singled out in this way embarrassing, rather than as a moment of pride.

In understanding the individualist and collectivist preferences, the manager needs to:

- ▶ Be aware of the needs and expectations of employees.
- ▶ Appreciate the contribution to group cohesion that the collectivist makes.
- ▶ Allow opportunities for those on the collectivist end to express concerns, assured that they will not hinder the harmony of the group.
- ▶ Provide rewards and appreciation appropriate to the preferences of the people you manage.
- ▶ Recognize the individualist's desire for acknowledgment.

Time Orientation: Short Term or Long Term

The dimension of time, as described by Geert Hofstede, refers to the adherence to, or pursuit of, "traditional values."[9] At the short-term end of this spectrum, a person's view of life and decision making takes place within a short time frame. For example, the short-term thinker will view shareholder interests in terms of the next quarterly report. He might propose laying off 2,000 employees because this will make the financial statement look strong. But it may have negative consequences for the long term, as it could leave the company short-staffed, unable at the end of a downturn to respond quickly to a growing market. Getting things done fast is important, but the focus is on short-term rewards. There is little concern for how a decision fits into the longer view of history. The short-term thinker says, "Time is money, you know."

On the other hand, the person with a long-term orientation views decision making in a broader context. There is no hurry to make a decision; more consideration is given to history and long-range future implications. Rather than rush into a decision, the long-term thinker slows down her decision making. Decisions will have far-reaching implica-

tions; let's not be in too much of a hurry to make a change that could have long-term consequences. "Slow and steady wins the race." In Japan, people take out hundred-year mortgages for their homes. It is hard to imagine that kind of long-term thinking in the United States.

. . . .

Several wine makers from California visited Bulgaria to advise the Bulgarians on how to produce more and better quality wine. As they began to share their wisdom, one Bulgarian looked at them in amazement at their audacity, "Gentlemen, my wine cellar is older than your *country*!"

. . . .

As a manager dealing with people's differing concepts of time, you need to:

➤ Recognize the perspectives others may bring to the decision-making process.

➤ Be responsive to those differences: the urgency of the short term, and the patience of the long-term.

Consider This

☑ On this spectrum of cultural differences, what are your preferences?

Communication
Direct	Indirect

Tolerance for Uncertainty
High	Low

Power
Egalitarian	Hierarchy

Identity
Individual	Collective

Time
Short-term orientation	Long-term orientation
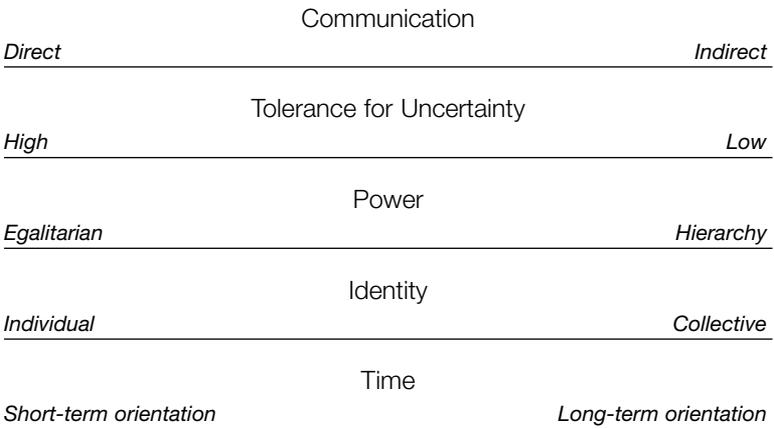
Power and Culture

In the United States, the management level of corporate America is heavily populated with Americans of European cultural origin.[10] Among this group are people with a strong tendency toward the left-hand column of this cultural scale. Working with, managing, and supervising people who bring a different worldview to the workplace can challenge their beliefs. We often want to work with people who act like ourselves, who do things the *right way*—which means doing things "like we do." Those in power often subconsciously reward and recognize those who reflect the dominant culture's view.

As a European American myself, it is often difficult for me to see the world from others' points of view. I carry my own biases from my own belief system, whether I am aware of those biases or not. Within the dominant culture, there is often an unconscious expectation that "they should all be like us." Somehow, our thinking goes, we can put up with their little quirks and quaint customs (i.e., their cultural views) and maybe one day they will become enlightened and see the world as we do.

The diversity of today's workforce (race, gender, ethnicity, religion, and so on), which reflects the changing demographics of the U.S. population, creates disputes and conflicts that are often driven by cultural views. The behavioral differences between the dominant group and minority groups can result in an "us versus them" mentality, whereby we see ourselves—whoever we are—as doing things the *right* way and others as doing things the *wrong* way. As demographics shift further, the dominant group can feel threatened, and the opportunities for conflict and distrust will increase. In addition, this growing diversity forces change, sometimes slowly, sometimes dramatically, and change inside an organization is always hard. Frequently, it is change itself that creates conflict. The effective manager of the 21st century has the ability to see that diversity can bring strengths as well as challenges to the workplace, and has the skills necessary to manage the inherent differences.

Notes

1. Geert Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage 2001).

2. Edward T. Hall, *Beyond Culture* (New York: Anchor Books, 1976).

3. Craig Storti, *Figuring Foreigners Out* (Yarmouth, Me.: Intercultural Press, 1998).

4. Stella Ting-Twomey, "Cross-Cultural Face-Negotiation: An Analytical Overview." Paper presented at Simon Fraser University, Harbour Centre, Vancouver, BC, Canada. April 15, 1992.

5. Deborah Tannen, *Talking from 9 to 5: How Women's and Men's Conversational Styles Affect Who Gets Heard, Who Gets Credit and What Gets Done at Work* (New York: William Morrow, 1994).

6. Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers: The Story of Success* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2008).

7. Ting-Twomey, "Cross-Cultural Face-Negotiation."

8. Ibid.

9. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences*.

10. Thomas Kochman and Jean Mavrelis, *Corporate Tribalism: White Men/White Women and Cultural Diversity at Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).