



30 Questions MIT

1. Explain the difference between “control”, “harmony” and “constraint” cultural approaches of the environment dimension. □

The first cultural approach, the control, means that people can dominate the environment. It can be changed in order to fit human needs. The second cultural approach, the harmony, means that people should live in harmony with the world around them (in contrast with the control approach, people are not trying to change the environment but they adapt themselves to it). The last one, the constraint cultural approach, means that people are constrained by the world around them. They cannot do anything to change the environment. In this approach, fate, luck and chance play a significant role.

2. There are seven perspectives that may help practitioners deal with cultural differences effectively. Please, choose one of those perspectives and explain it.

Culture is not the same as nation:

- Most nations have several cultures within their borders
- The borders of nations are subject to culture change as mixing from neighbouring countries occurs
- Culture as a composite of subcultures helps to better understand social groups (gender, etc.)
- Managers should recognize heterogeneity and not accept facile generalizations.

3. Cultural elements can be categorized in tacit and explicit. Explain these two categories using the classic Iceberg Metaphor. □

On an Iceberg, there are two parts: a small one that people can see, and a bigger one that is invisible by people. What we call “explicit” is the visible part. It can be captured, written down and presented in documents and databases. These are the characteristics that you identify as belonging to your culture. What we call “tacit” is the invisible part. This is the knowledge that is in our heads. It is much less concrete and more difficult to document and measure. However, it is more valuable because it provides context. Tacit knowledge requires personal contact and trust to share effectively. These characteristics are everything that you know about your culture but that you do not know that you know.



4. What is individual envisioning and how does it differ from organizational envisioning? □

We speak about individual envisioning when people tend to look after themselves and their immediate family only. We speak about organizational envisioning when people tend to belong to groups who look after each other in exchange for loyalty. These two dimensions depend on the country.

5. What is the difference between high-context and low-context type of communication and how do they differ or relate from the direct and indirect approach? □

A low context culture is one in which things are fully (though concisely) spelled out. Things are made explicit, and there is considerable dependence on what is actually said or written. A high context culture is one in which the communicators assume a great deal of commonality of knowledge and views, so that less is spelled out explicitly and much more is implicit or communicated in indirect ways. In a low context culture, more responsibility is placed on the listener to keep up their knowledge base and remain plugged into informal networks. Low context cultures include Anglos, Germanics and Scandinavians. High context cultures include Japanese, Arabs and French.

6. Please explain the Four Layers of Diversity model developed by Garden Swartz and Rowe. Mention at least two elements of each dimension □

The "Four Layers" model is essential to truly understanding your workforce. This model can help the manager understand that diversity comprises many characteristics of people at work, not only a few.

The dimensions are :

- **Organizational Dimensions** with the functional level/classification and the management status
- **External Dimensions** with the religion and the personal habits
- **Internal Dimensions** with the age and the sexual orientation
- And the **personality**



7. How would you define the term culture? Please provide your own definition and mention at least four main characteristics of culture. □

Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.

Four main characteristics: values, holidays, customs, traditions

8. Within the context of Global Human Resource Management, there are three types of employees: HCN, PCN and TCN. Please explain briefly the differences among them.

→ **HCN (Host-country nationals)** are employees who have the same nationality as the local subsidiary (= filiale). This could be a Chinese employee working at the Chinese subsidiary of the German company.

→ **PCN (Parent-country nationals)** are employees whose nationality is the same as the one of the firm headquarters.

For example: a German employee of a German company who is working at a Chinese subsidiary.

→ **TCN (Third-country nationals)** are employees whose nationality is different from the one of either the headquarters or the subsidiary office. In this scenario, this might mean an Indian employee working at the Chinese office of the German company.

9. What is the difference between a stereotype and a generalization? □

Generalizations and stereotypes are two well known, seem similar:

Generalization: People who are unfamiliar with another culture can explain topics in a culturally sensitive way. Second, it is always based on observation. And last, it informs others about general social, cultural, historical, geographical and other characteristics to those who know less.

Stereotypes: It presents a fixed and immutable image of group, made from a very small sample. Moreover, when confronted by facts, crumbles quickly.



10. Please establish a connection between Leadership and Intercultural Competence and in the contexts of multinational organizations. □

Working in multinational organizations means that you face to different cultures (different language, different religion...). An awareness of cultural differences is essential for the HR manager. Culture is shared, learned, is systematic and organized. **Leadership** is the ability to influence people toward the attainment of organizational foals. It is dynamic and it involves the use of power. A good leader will be able to enlist cooperation, will have good interpersonal skills, will have tact and diplomacy. He will also have a good judgment and decisiveness, and will be active. The **link that we can do between leadership and intercultural competence** in the context of multinational organizations is that concerning the differences of culture, the difficulties that people can have to work with, a good leadership is essential in order to manage these differences.

11. There are seven foundation competencies of intercultural competence. Please explain two of them. □

Communication competency:

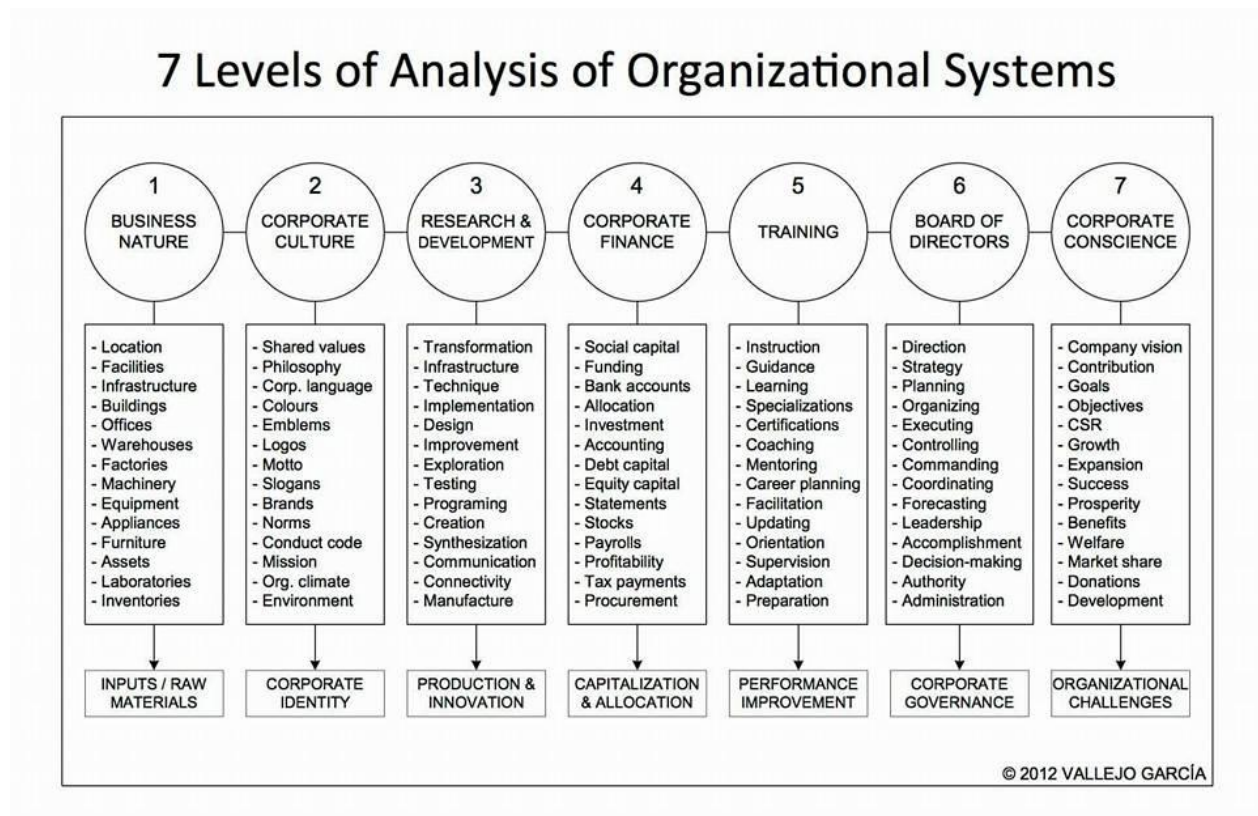
- Engaging in active listening
- Using and interpreting non-verbal communication
- Engaging in verbal and written communication effectively
- Providing constructive feedback to others

Ethics competency:

- Identifying and describing ethical principles
- Assessing the importance of ethical issues
- Applying laws, regulations and rules in making decisions and taking action
- Demonstrating dignity and respect for others
- Being honest and open in communication



12. Mention and briefly describe the seven levels of analysis of organizational systems. ▯



13. What is the role of language in culture, and more specifically in intercultural competence? ▯

The language in culture is very important, it represents the history of a civilization, and it represents the history of a country and its people. It is primarily unique modes of thought and expression. Language is social glue; it created a sense of belonging. In the intercultural competence the language represent a strength and a connection means.



14. What is the role of the “Train Story” in the video watched in class? What advice would you give to Gavin if he had the opportunity to run this project since the beginning again? □

15. What is the difference between values and norms? Please define, describe and provide examples. □

A value is a concept that describes the beliefs of an individual or culture and which is learned unconsciously, implicit since childhood. Values are acquired so early in our lives and therefore outsiders cannot directly observe them. A set of values may be placed into the notion of a value system. Values are considered subjective and vary across people and cultures. A value is a moral conviction that defines good and bad.

- A norm is a rule that is socially enforced. It is a moral judgment that defines wrong and right behaviour, the allowed and the disallowed, what is wanted and not wanted within a culture. A norm gives a person a rule for how they should behave.
- So the difference is; a value is acquired at birth with parent education all what is implicit and we said what we are.
- A standard for its represents all the behaviours to adopt in a civilization is increasingly global general.

16. Explain the difference between past, present and future of the cultural orientations model. Provide an example of each. □

The past, present, future orientation of a culture is fundamental to its existence and almost impossible to reconcile with differently held views. Differently oriented cultures will view each other at best as quaint and foolish and, at worst, with considerable contempt. Past-oriented societies are concerned with traditional values and ways of doing things. Tradition is, in fact, highly valued and attempts to mess with that traditions are regarded with a lot of distrust and suspicion. As a result those that are past-oriented tend to be conservative in management and slow to change those things that are tied to the past.



- Present-oriented societies include the rest of the Spanish-speaking Latin American countries and many African countries. They see the past as passed and the future as uncertain. In other words, what is done is done and tomorrow may never come so we had better be focused on today. They consequently prefer short-term benefits and immediate results.
- Future-oriented societies have a great deal of optimism about the future. They think they understand it and can shape it through their actions. They view management as a matter of planning, doing and controlling (as opposed to going with the flow, letting things happen).

17. Explain the difference between “past”, “present” and “future” cultural orientations of the time dimension. □

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory is a framework for cross-cultural communication, developed by Geert Hofstede. It describes the effects of a society's culture on the values of its members, and how these values relate to behaviour, using a structure derived from factor analysis. Long-term orientation is when you are focused on the future. You are willing to delay short-term material or social success or even short-term emotional gratification in order to prepare for the future. If you have this cultural perspective, you value persistence, perseverance, saving and being able to adapt.

Short-term orientation is when you are focused on the present or past and consider them more important than the future. If you have a short-term orientation, you value tradition, the current social hierarchy and fulfilling your social obligations. You care more about immediate gratification than long-term fulfilment.

You should note that the concepts of long-term orientation and short-term orientation address the different ways cultures view time and the importance of the past, present and the future. Cultures demonstrating a short-term orientation will be more concerned with the past and present and will focus their efforts and beliefs on matters related to the short-term, while cultures demonstrating a long-term time orientation will be more concerned with the future and focus their efforts on future-orientated goals.



18. Mention and briefly explain the 6 stages of the Intercultural Sensitivity Model (from ethnocentrism to eth- no-relativism). □

Ethnocentrism is attitude that one's own cultural group is the center of everything. That means that what goes on in our culture is seen as "natural and correct", and what goes on in other cultures is perceived as "unnatural and incorrect". There are three stages of ethnocentrism:

- The **denial stage**: people deny the existence of cultural differences
- The **defense stage**: people are not ignorant to other cultures, they recognize the existence of other cultures but not their validity
- The **minimization stage**: people try to minimize cultural differences by telling themselves that people are more similar than dissimilar

Ethno-relativism is an ability to see many values and behaviors as cultural rather than universal. There are three stages of ethno-relativism:

- The **acceptance stage**: people begin to recognize other cultures and accept them as viable alternatives to their own worldview)
- The **adaptation stage**: people begin to view cultural differences as a valuable resource. They adapt their behaviors to the different cultural norms of their environment
- The **integration stage**: people accept that their identity is not based in any single culture

19. Please establish the difference between traditions, habits and rituals. □

Tradition is a generic term that encompasses a wide variety of things and concepts that are handed down by one generation to another.

Ritual is an act or a series of acts that are performed or observed in a society on occasions, events, festivals, and ceremonies. These rituals have a symbolic value and also have a religious basis. So a handshake to greet others is a ritual, while the practice to honor and respect the seniors is a tradition. A habit is something done repeatedly for the purpose of performing the action itself.



20. What are the characteristics of expressive cultures and how do they differ from instrumental cultures? □

In expressive cultures, display and accentuation of emotions are key components. People tend to give less concern for factual details and precision. Those who hide their emotions may be perceived as unapproachable, cold or deceitful. In instrumental cultures, communication is problem-centered, rational, pragmatic and issue-oriented. People value the reduction of emotion in conversation. They seek cognitive, rational alignment but not emotional alignment. The difference between the both is that expressive cultures express the emotions, the feelings, and give a big importance to them. In the contrast, instrumental cultures are more rational and do not take in account the emotions.

21. There are four types of teams, one of them is called “token-team” please describe it briefly. □

Token teams: only a single member, the so-called token, has a culturally differing background.

22. Leaders operate differently in organizations. What is the role of Religion and Spirituality in the workplace?

Today, people demand more than mere professional success In Their work lives. They greater ask for spiritual satisfaction. Since the beginning of time, celebrities-have found true peace and happiness in religion. Morality and virtue can not be in the Talked about lack of true religion, for They originate in a good, clear conscience.



23. Intercultural competence can be explained under three components: cognitive, emotional and social. Explain (in general) each component. □

Cognitive : Of or relating to cognition; concerned with the act or process of knowing, perceiving.

- Knowledge
- Comprehension
- Application
- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Evaluation

Emotional : Pertaining to or involving emotion or the emotions.

- Receive
- Respond
- Value
- Organize
- Internalize

Social : Social skills are part of every assessment, but intercultural competence is mostly judged by an assessor concerning his or her subjective impression.

- A social rapport
- A communicative consciousness

24. What is the difference between universalism and particularism? □

Universalism : Universalism searches for what is systematic and tries to impose the rules, laws, and norms on all of its members so that things can run more efficiently.

Particularism : Particularism searches for what is different, unique, or exceptional in order to create something that is incomparable or of special quality.

25. There are five interrelated aspects of intercultural competence. Explain two of them.

Question annulée au partiel → mail □



26. Two main characteristics of core cultural dimensions are: monochronic or linear and polychronic or non- linear. Please explain both. □

Monochronic or Linear culture means that a person usually do one thing at a time and doesn't like to be interrupted before that work is finished. Linear people are very organized and their "To-Do list" is well scheduled.

Polychronic or Non-Linear people represent the opposite. They usually work at several things at the same time and are easily distracted. They often change their plans at the last time, but it doesn't represent a difficulty for them.

27. What is the role of values in culture? Please establish a comparison between national culture and organi- zational culture in terms of values. □

Values are ethical models created by a person or a group who admit these models are the best to follow. Values unite people in a global and common behavior to live in a group. In organizational culture, they tend to unite people around values made up to live in a group easily.

In national culture, they tend to unite people around values already here, made up by the history of the country or the group.

28. What is uncertainty avoidance? Provide examples of high uncertainty avoidance and low uncertainty avoidance. □

Uncertainty avoidance is a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. People with low uncertainly avoidance tend to joke on irony and on ambiguity more than others.

High uncertainly avoidance: North Korean people, Russian people and German people.

Low uncertainly avoidance: French people, Spanish people and Italian people.

29. What does Hofstede mean with masculinity versus femininity dimensions of culture?



Geert Hofstede was explaining the fact that there are two different dimensions of culture: Masculinity and Femininity.

“Masculinity stands for a society in which social gender roles are clearly distinct: Men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.”

“Femininity stands for a society in which social gender roles overlap: Both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.”

Official definition by Hofstede.

30. Technological innovation is one of the drivers of globalization, what is the connection with intercultural management? Mention at least another driver of globalization. □

Technological innovations represent one of the biggest way to connect several cultures by match them with social networks, new kind of medias ...

Politicians can be seen as levers in the globalization. They can attract businesses by putting down borders barriers or by lowing taxes.