

An Introduction to Intercultural Communication

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Hello...

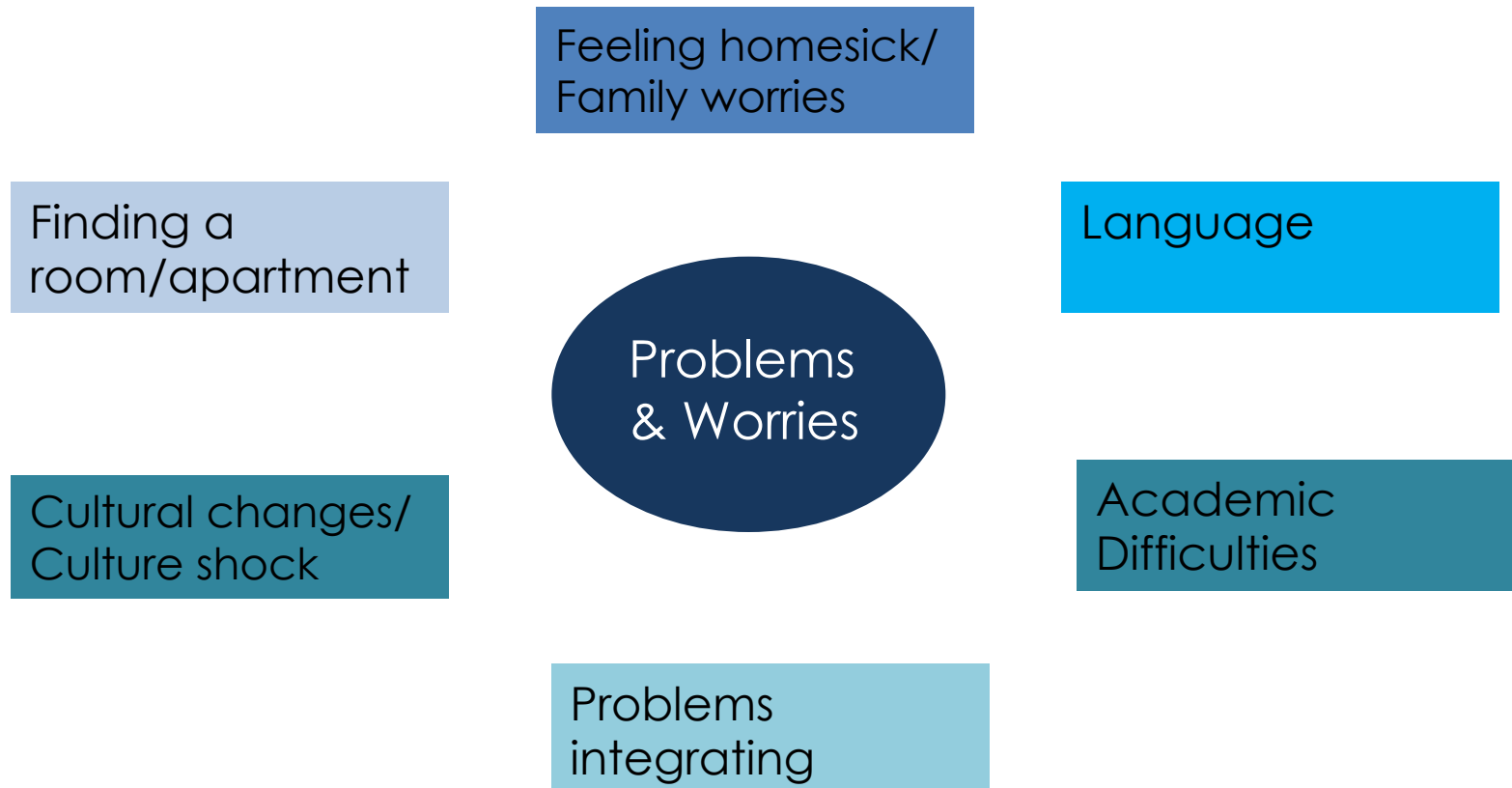
About me...

- Name: Anna Wohlfarth
- Work: German Academic Service (DAAD)
 - International Research Marketing
 - Onlinecommunications
- Trainer for Intercultural Communication
 - International organisations
 - Refugee organizations

Students become
more and more mobile....

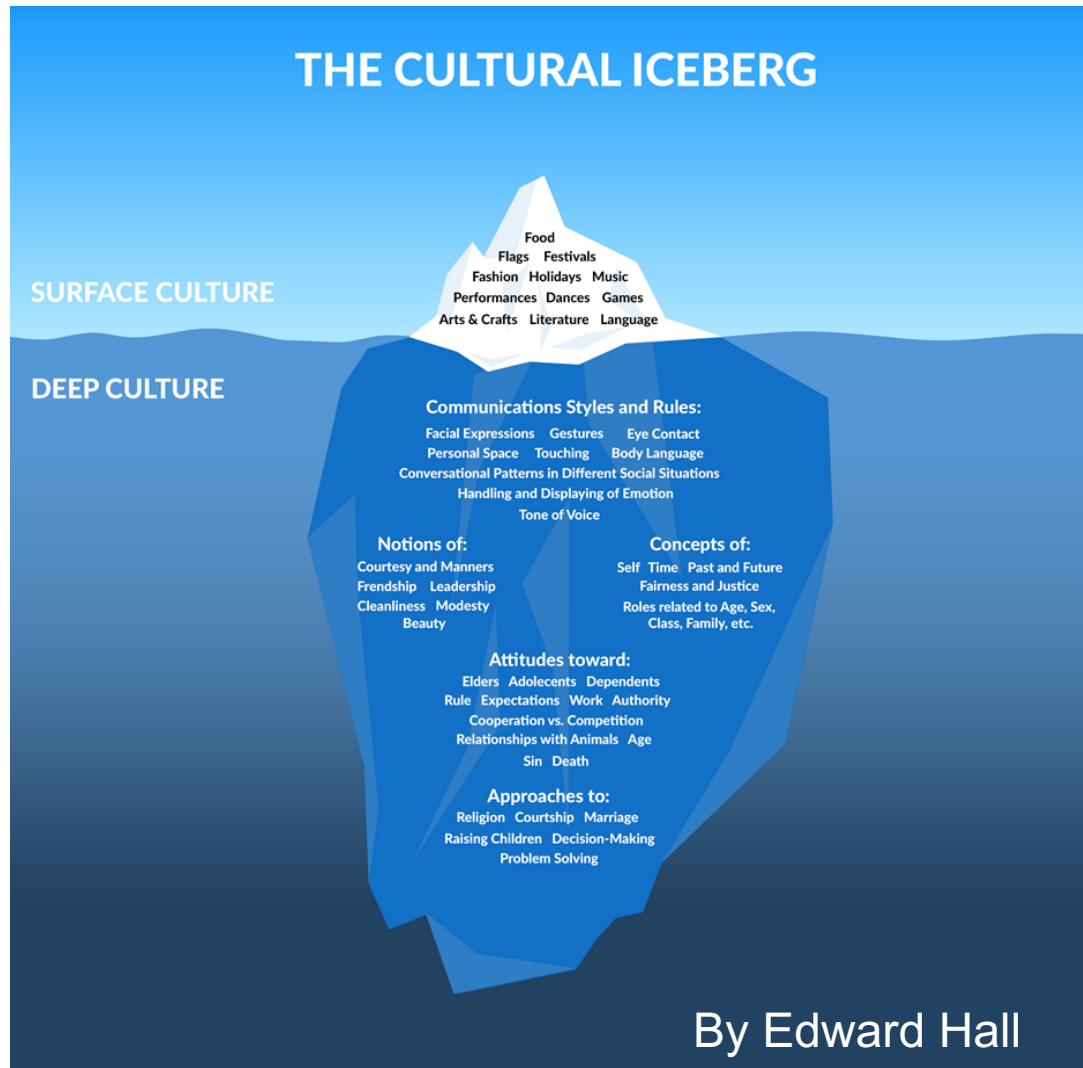


Problems & worries of international students



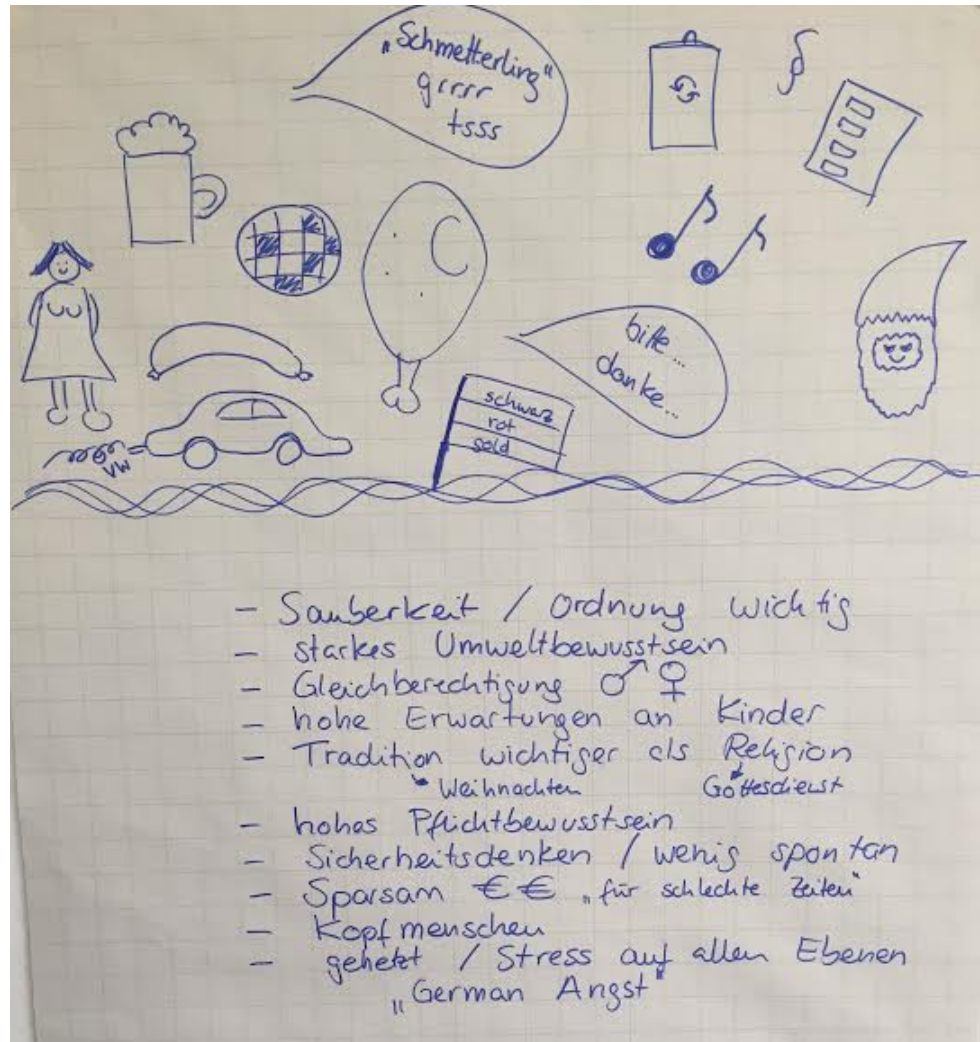
What is
culture anyway?

Iceberg Model



Example:

Group work „The German Cultural Iceberg“



The German Playground

An American mom found some surprising habits in Berlin, she wrote:

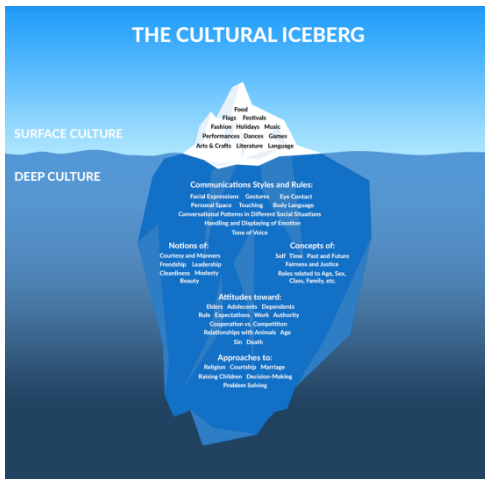
„The first time I went to a playground in Berlin, I freaked. All the German parents were huddled together, drinking coffee, not paying attention to their children who were hanging off a wooden dragon 20 feet above a sand pit. Where were the piles of soft padded foam?

“Achtung! Nein!” I cried in my bad German. Both kids and parents ignored me. Contrary to stereotypes, most German parents I’ve met are the opposite of strict. They place a high value on independence and responsibility. Those parents at the park weren’t ignoring their children; they were trusting them.”



Cultural models

Iceberg Model



“Rucksack” Model Cultural Lenses





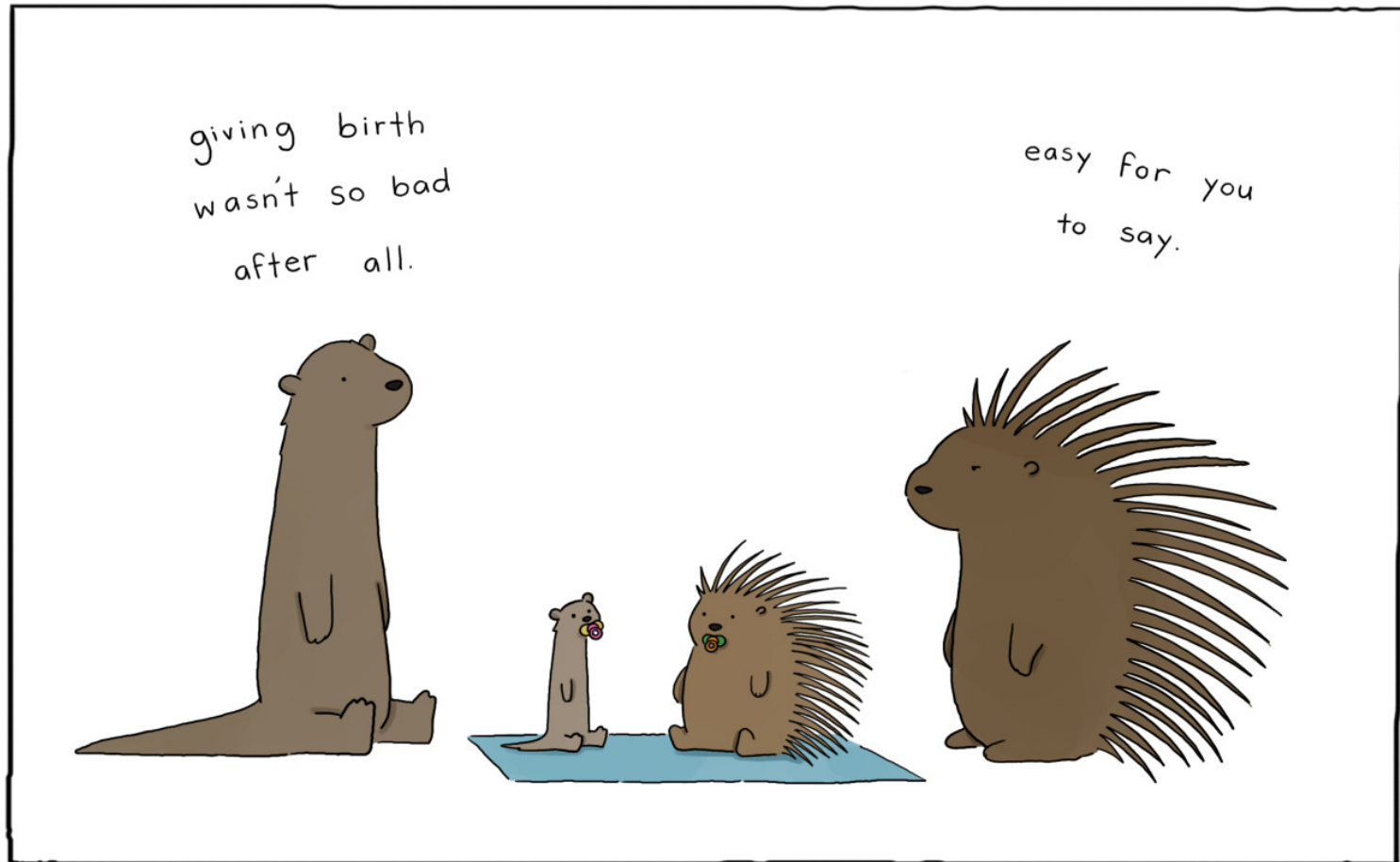
is ...

- learned
- shared
- gives a sense of identity
- gives orientation
- dynamic
- multidimensional



What is
normal?

Intercultural communication: Matter of perspective



Otherness never
exists for itself

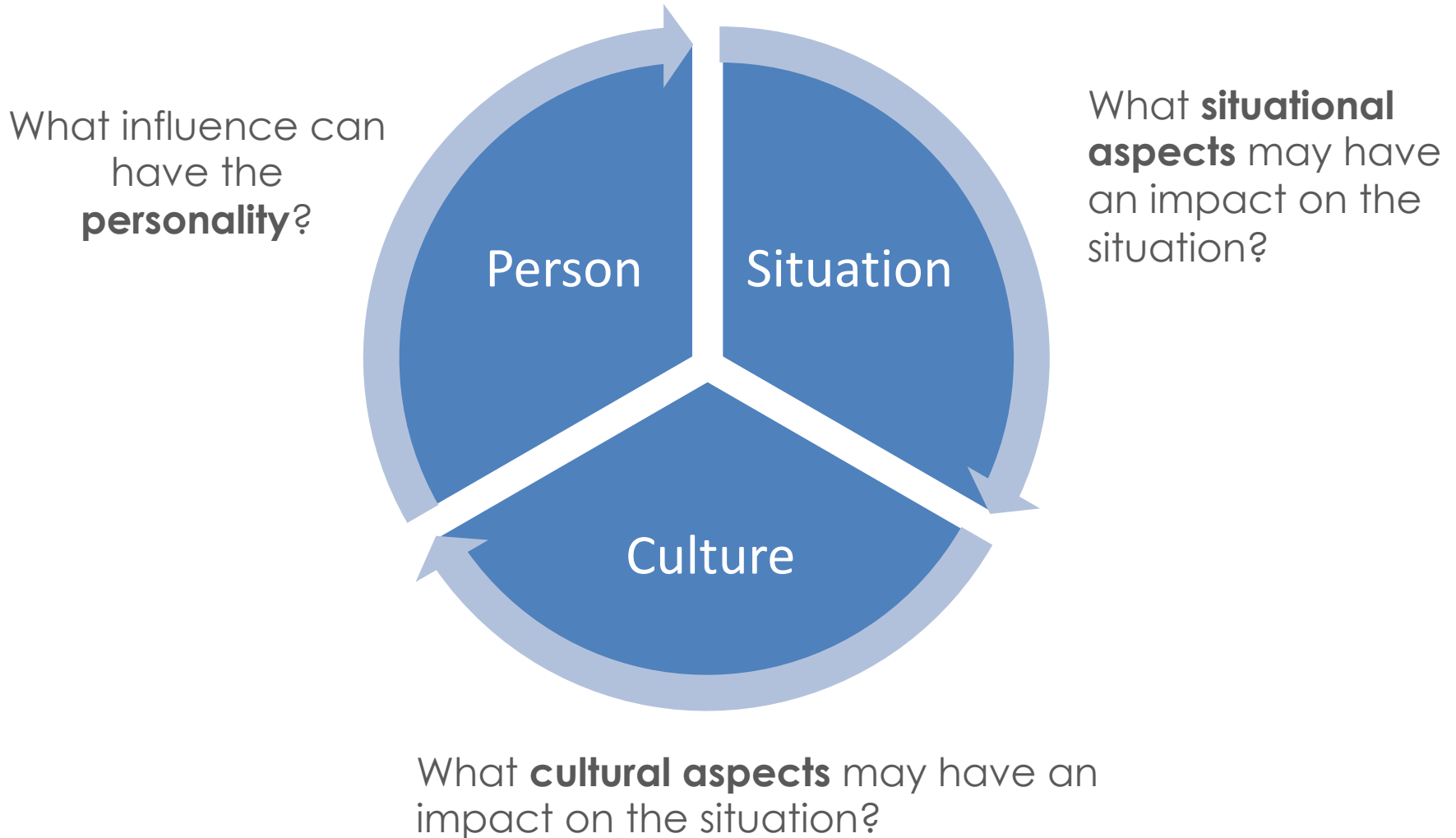
Situation at a German university

Ahmed, a student from Lebanon, would like to give his professor a gift as he is very thankful for his kindness and support. The professor is not willing to accept the present (a book) and rejects it. Ahmed is disappointed by the rejection of his gift and thinks that the behavior of the professor is very rude and insulting.



CPSI Model:

A method of cultural analysis

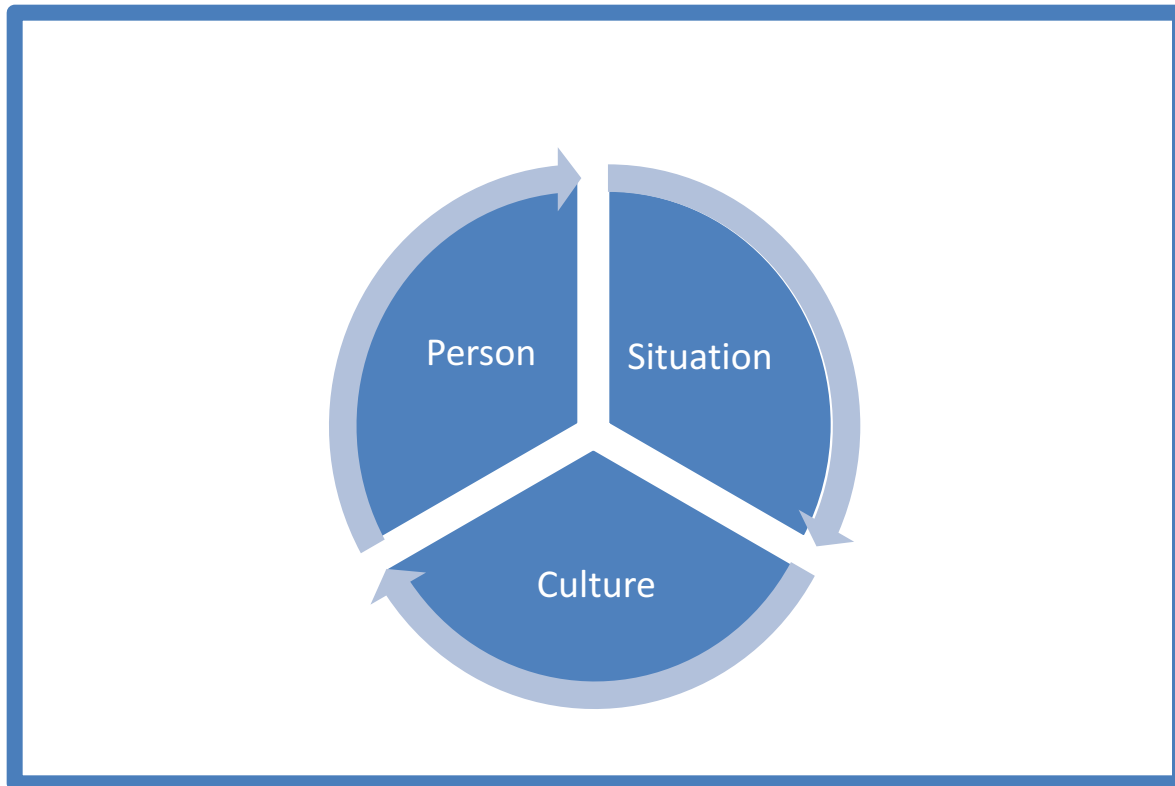


CPSI Model:

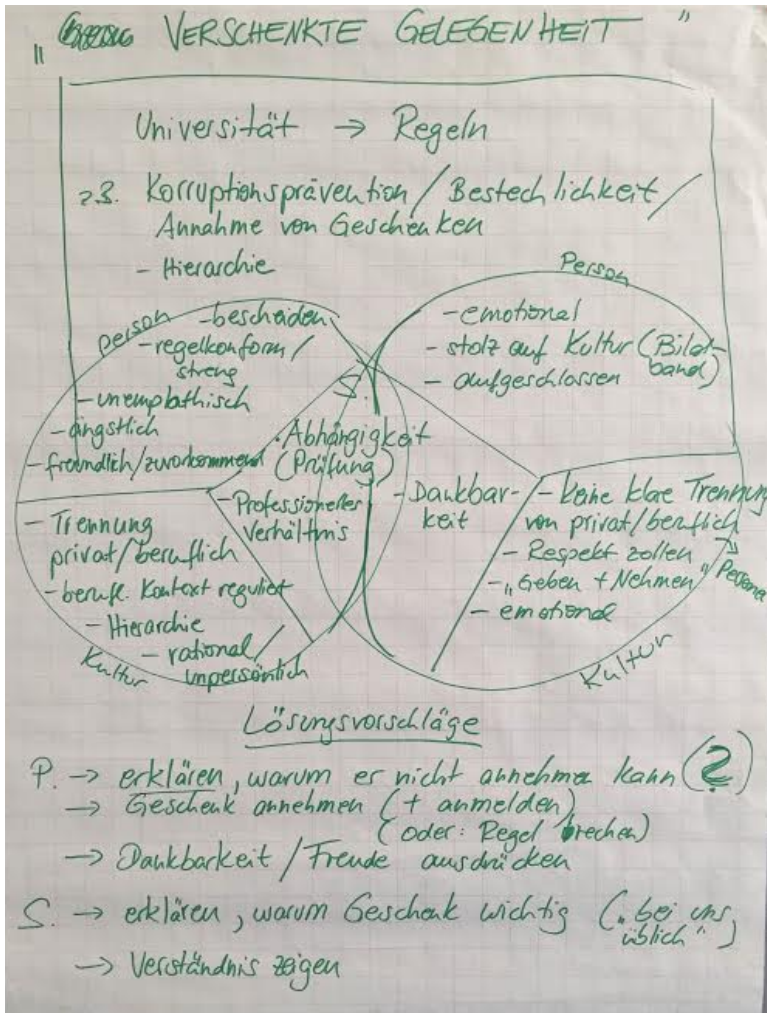
A method of cultural analysis

Institution

What impact might the **institution** have?



CPSI Model: Group work (example)



What are
cultural standards
and norms?

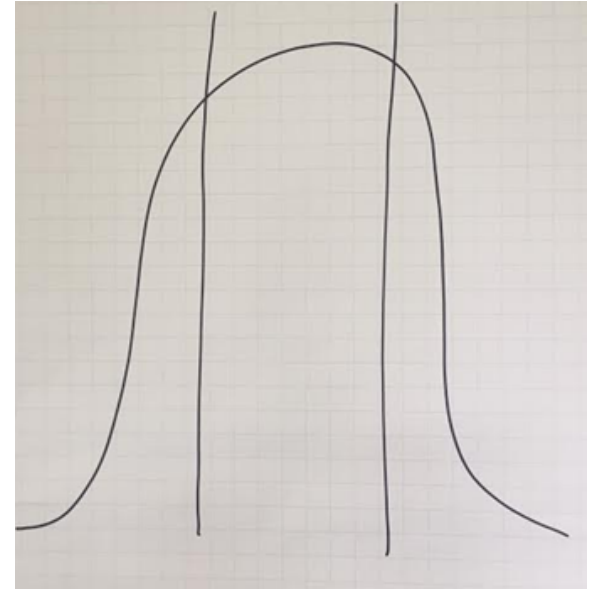
Intercultural researchers

- Geert Hofstede
- Edward Hall
- Alexander Thomas

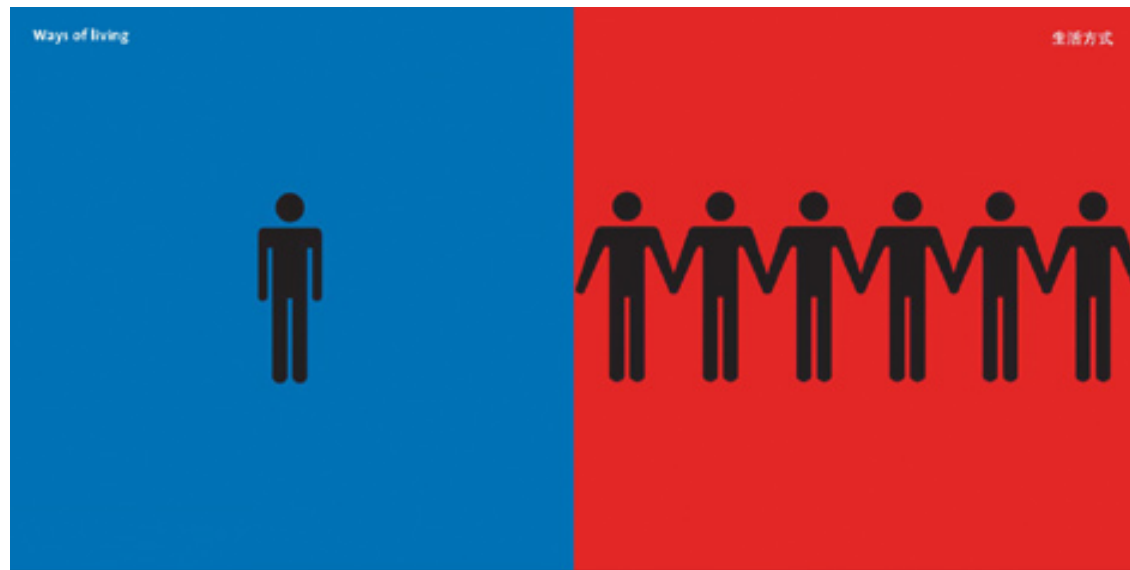
Cultural standards are...

... forms of perception, thought patterns, judgment and interaction that are shared by a majority of the members of a specific culture who regard their behavior as normal, typical and binding.

Alexander Thomas



Individualism vs. Collectivism

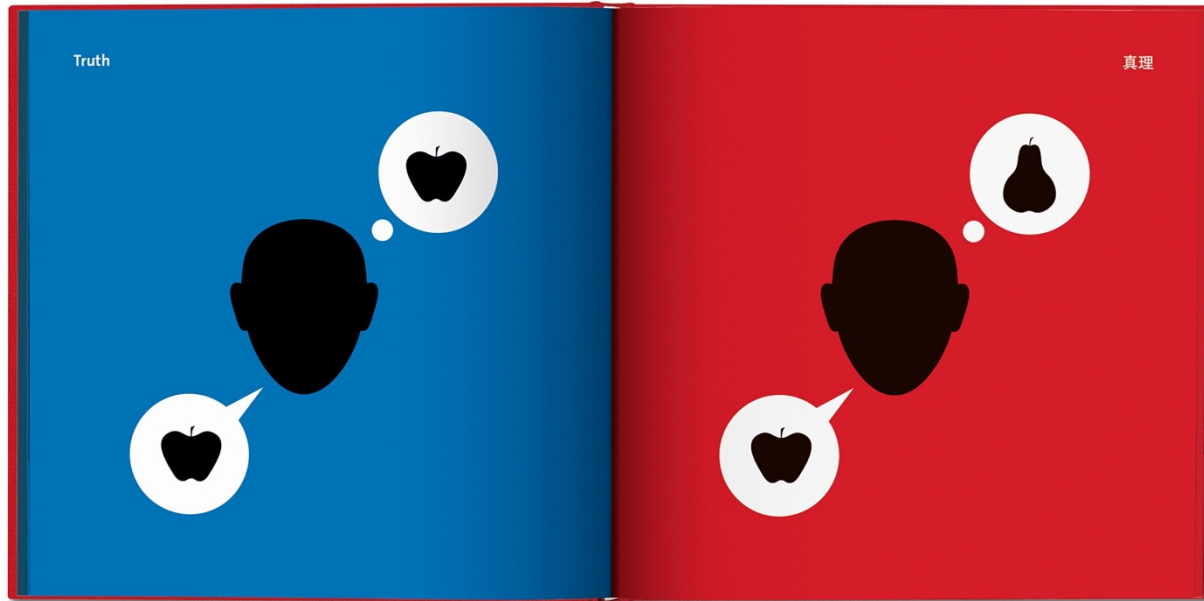


Individualism vs. Collectivism (Hofstede)

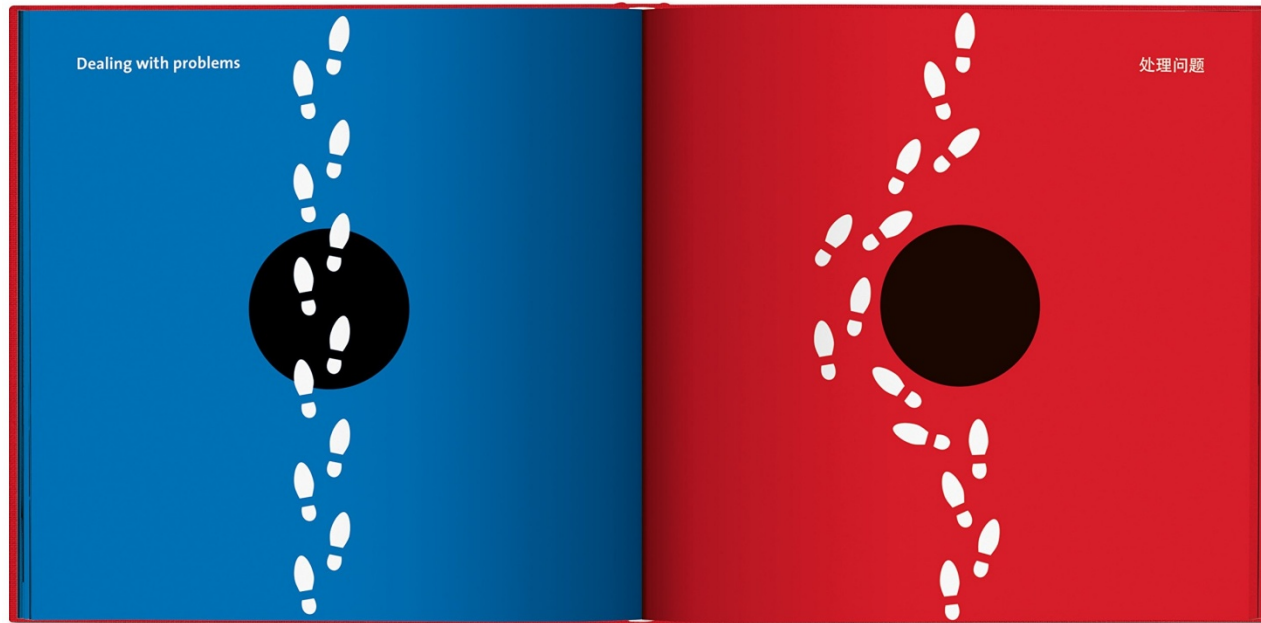


USA (91)	China (20)
Australia (90)	Thailand (20)
	Japan (47)
France (71)	
Germany (67)	
Schweden (71)	
	Brasil (38)

High vs. Low Context Cultures

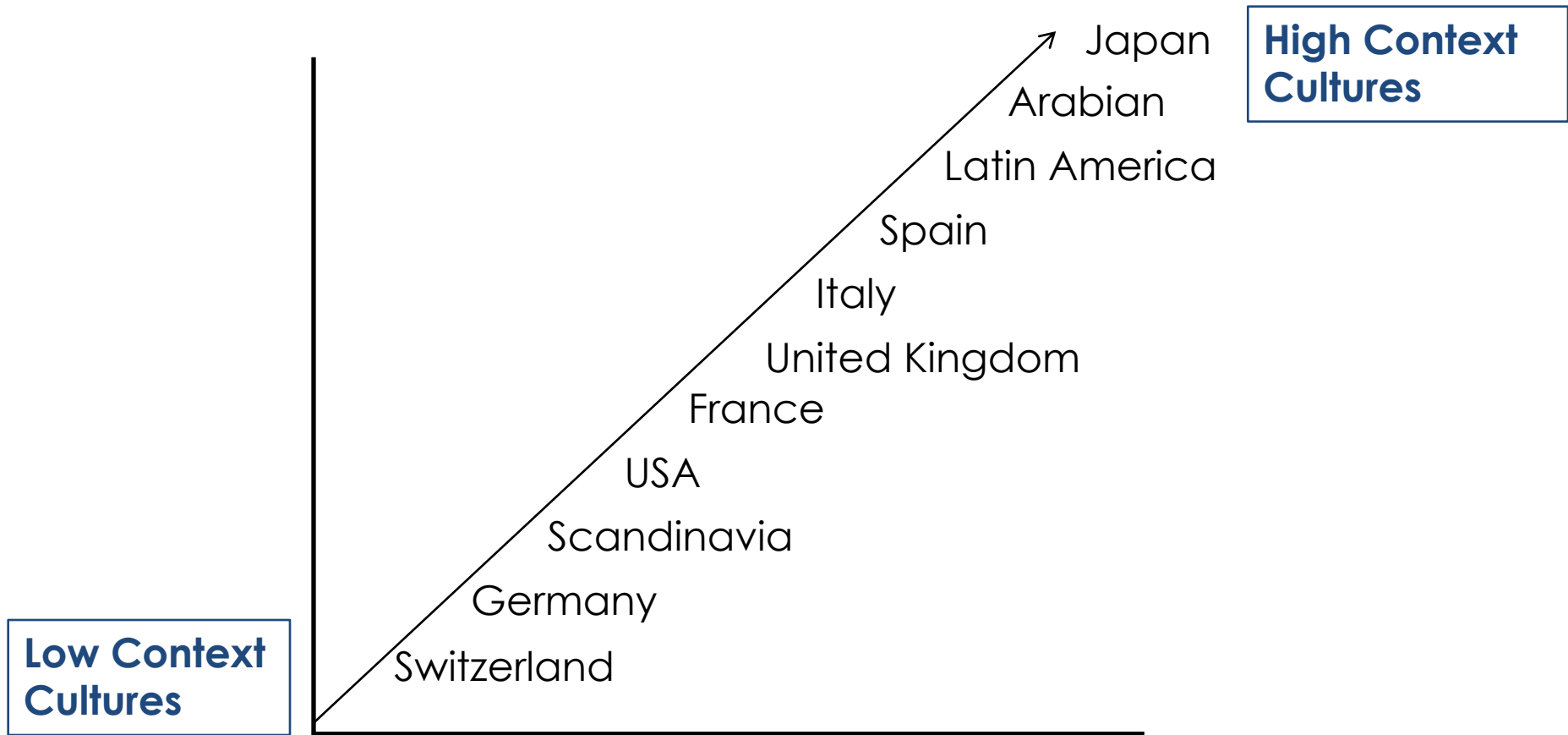


High vs. Low Context Cultures



High vs. Low Context Cultures

(Edward Hall)



Task vs. relationship orientation

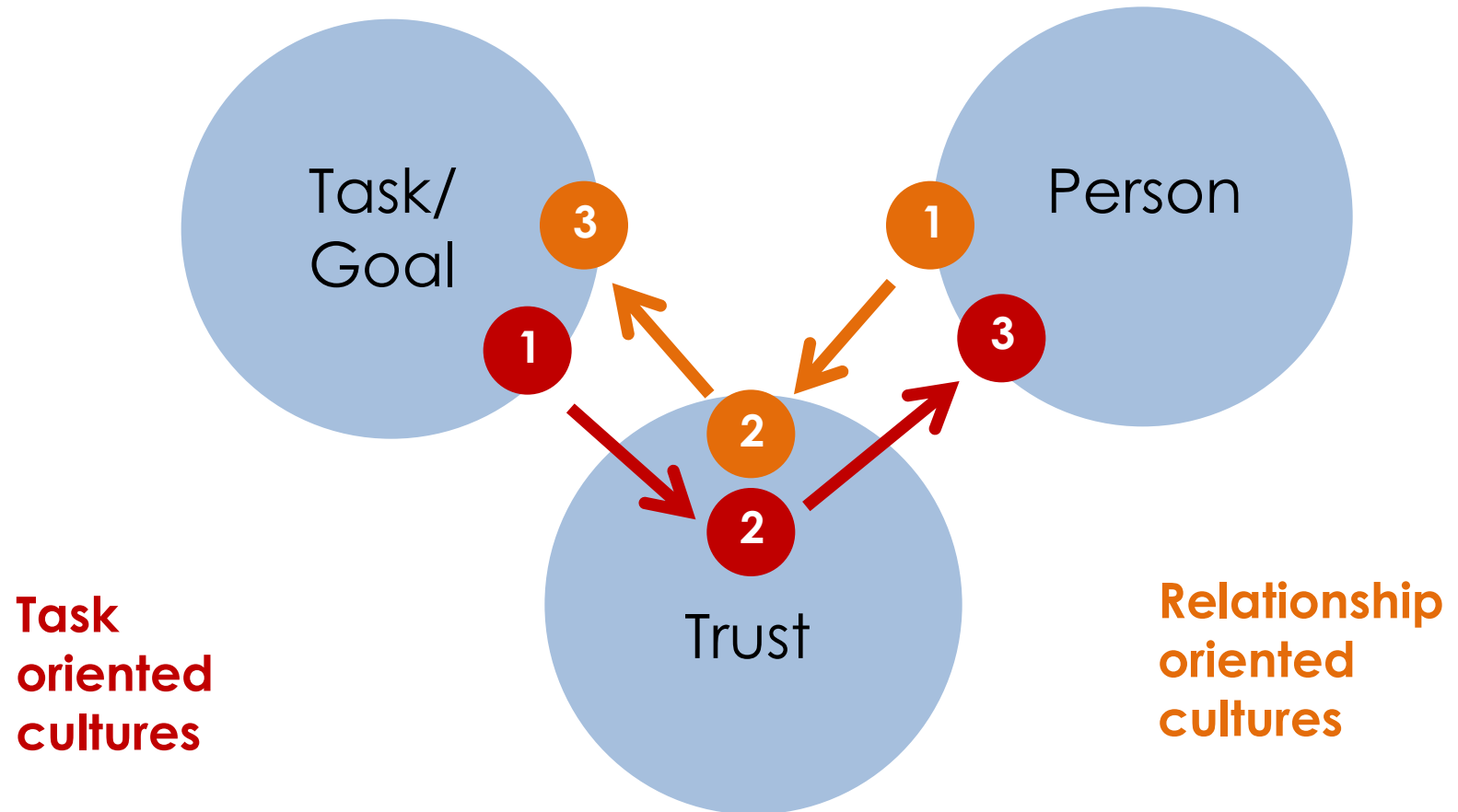
(Alexander Thomas)



- | | | |
|---------------|------------|-----------|
| • Germany | • Austria | • Hungary |
| • Switzerland | • UK | • Poland |
| • Netherlands | • France | • China |
| • USA | • Spain | • Brasil |
| • Scandinavia | • Italy | • Russia |
| • Canada | • Portugal | • Mexico |
| • Australia | • Greece | • Iran |
| | | • Japan |
| | | • India |

Relationship building

Task vs. Relationship oriented cultures



East meets West

By Yang Liu /Book recommendation



Do universities have
their own culture?

Cultural standards at universities?

Exercise

A. Yellow

I love when the sun is shining.

B. Blue

I love rainy weather.

Students and admin staff

Exercise

A. Yellow

Students support each other.
There is a tendency not to leave anybody behind. Modesty is valued highly.

B. Blue

Students are competitive.
Self-confidence is valued highly.

Students and admin staff Exercise

A. Yellow

Admin staff see themselves as service providers and help students as good as possible.

B. Blue

Students have to make their way through bureaucracy of the university on their own.

Students and admin staff Exercise

Collectivism

Focus on care

Students support each other. There is a tendency not to leave anybody behind. Modesty is valued highly.

Admin staff see themselves as service providers and help students as good as possible.

Individualism

Focus in self-reliance

Students are competitive. Self-confidence is valued highly.

Students have to make their way through bureaucracy of the university on their own.

Communication at universities

Exercise

A. Yellow

Direct messages with negative contents are important for the clarification of issues.

B. Blue

Direct messages with negative contents should be avoided because they worsen social climate.

Communication at universities

Exercise

A. Yellow

Conflicts should be expressed as early as possible, in order to find a quick solution.

B. Blue

Conflicts should not be tackled directly.

Communication at universities

Exercise vs.

Low Context Culture

High Context Culture

Direct communication

Indirect communication

Direct messages with negative contents are important for the clarification of issues.

Direct messages with negative contents should be avoided because they worsen social climate.

Conflicts should be expressed as early as possible.

Conflicts should not be tackled directly.

Interpersonal orientation at universities

Exercise

A. Yellow

Teaching staff has fixed office/consultation hours.

B. Blue

Teaching staff follow an open-door policy.

Interpersonal orientation at universities

Exercise

A. Yellow

Making a gift to a professor can easily be seen as an attempt to bribery.

B. Blue

It is common practice to make gifts to professors in order to establish/maintain good relationships.

Interpersonal orientation at universities

Exercise

Task oriented culture

Task orientation

Teaching staff has fixed office/consultation hours.

Making a gift to a professor can easily be seen as an attempt to bribery.

Relationship oriented culture

Relationship orientation

Teaching staff follow an open-door policy.

It is common practice to make gifts to professors in order to establish/maintain good relationships.

Knowing about cultural standards...

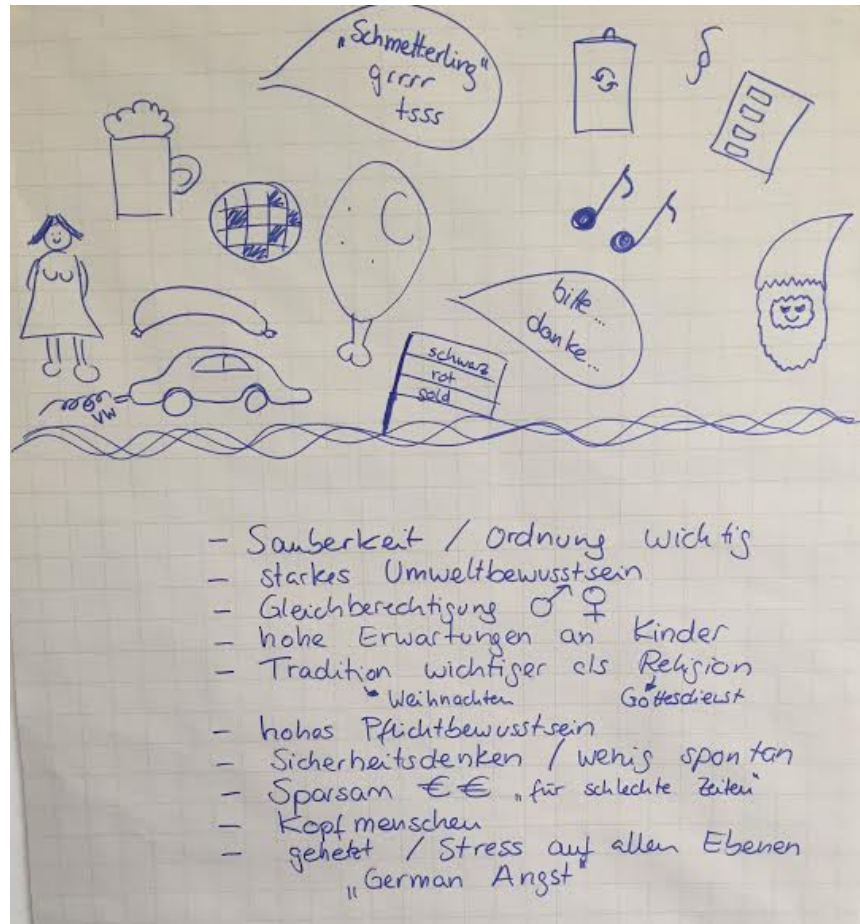
- can help to better understand other cultures
- it is an enjoyable way to expand cultural knowledge and
- can help deepen one's cultural awareness about your own and other cultures

Keep in mind...

it's not just about culture (CPSI model).

What is typical
German?

What is typical German?



Doing Business with the Germans

by Sylvia Schroll-Machl / Book recommendation



Sylvia Schroll-Machl

Doing Business with Germans

Their Perception, Our Perception

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht

1. Objectivism/Task orientation
2. Appreciation for Rules, Regulations and Structures
3. High Responsibility, Awareness & Internalised Control
4. Time Planning
5. Separation of Personality and Living Spheres
6. Low Context Culture
7. Individualism

Last but not least...

- My personal recommendation:
Take a look at your own culture...it's fun!
- Have a great time in Berlin.

Thank you for your attention!

Interested in intercultural trainings?

Inhouse-Trainings? Webinars?

Let's get in touch.



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