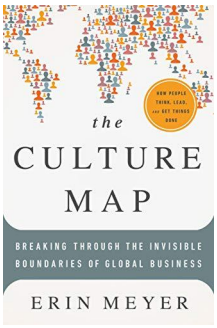

YOUR KINDLE NOTES FOR:

The Culture Map (INTL ED): Decoding How People Think, Lead, and Get Things Done Across Cultures

by Erin Meyer

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74 Highlights

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 8

> the common assumption about the French is that they are masters of implicit and indirect communication, speaking and listening with subtlety and sensitivity, while Americans are thought of as prone to explicit and direct communication—the blunter the better.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 9

> In a French setting, positive feedback is often given implicitly, while negative feedback is given more directly. In the United States, it's just the opposite. American managers usually give positive feedback directly while trying to couch negative messages in positive, encouraging language.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 20

> The culture sets a range, and within that range each individual makes a choice. It is not a question of culture or personality, but of culture and personality.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 22

> when examining how people from different cultures relate to one another, what matters is not the absolute position of either culture on the scale but rather the relative position of the two cultures. It is this relative positioning that determines how people view one another.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 23

> cultural relativity is the key to understanding the impact of culture on human interactions.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 24

> Most of us have a deep protective instinct for the culture we consider our own, and, though we may criticize it bitterly ourselves, we may become easily incensed if someone from outside the culture dares to do so.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 28

> When interacting with someone from another culture, try to watch more, listen more, and speak less. Listen before you speak and learn before you act.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 34

> a low level of shared context—that is, few shared reference points and comparatively little implicit knowledge linking speaker and listener.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 34

> In low-context cultures, effective communication must be simple, clear, and explicit in order to effectively pass the message, and most communicators will obey this requirement, usually without being fully conscious of it.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 35

> “Tell them what you are going to tell them, then tell them, then tell them what you’ve told them.” This is the philosophy of low-context communication in a nutshell.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 49

> If I am not sure, I have to take the responsibility to ask for clarification.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 50

> communicating is not just about speaking but also listening.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 50

> Saying “no” between the lines is common throughout Asia, including China, Japan, and Korea, and especially when speaking to a boss or a client.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 51

> Simply asking for clarification can work wonders.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 54

> What if you have a blend of many cultures all on one team—Americans who recap incessantly and nail everything down in writing, Japanese who read the air, French who speak at the second degree, British who love to use deadpan irony as a form of humor, and Chinese who learn as young children to beat around the bush?

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 55

> On a multicultural team, most misunderstanding takes place between people who come from two high-context cultures with entirely different roots, such as the Brazilians communicating with the Chinese.

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> There is just one easy strategy to remember: Multicultural teams need low-context processes.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 57

> The best moment to develop the processes is when the team is forming, before miscommunication takes place.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 57

> “This is our team culture, which we have explicitly agreed on and all feel comfortable with.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 58

> The tendency to put everything in writing, which is a mark of professionalism and transparency in a low-context culture, may suggest to high-context colleagues that you don’t trust them to follow through on their verbal commitments.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 59

> “It was that easy,” she says. “Once people understood I was asking for a written recap because the big boss requested it, they were fine with that. And, as I explained that this was a very natural way to work in Germany, they were doubly fine with it. If I ever need my staff to behave in a non-Indonesian way, I now start by explaining the cultural difference. If I don’t, the negative reactions fly.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 62

> Some cultures that are low-context and explicit may be cryptically indirect with negative criticism, while other cultures that speak between the lines may be explicit, straight talkers when telling you what you did wrong. As we will see, the French and the Americans are not the only cultures that swap places on the Communicating and Evaluating scales.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 62

> People from all cultures believe in “constructive criticism.” Yet what is considered constructive in one culture may be viewed as destructive in another.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 65

> The Chinese manager learns never to criticize a colleague openly or in front of others, while the Dutch manager learns always to be honest and to give the message straight. Americans are trained to wrap positive messages around negative ones, while the French are trained to criticize passionately and provide positive feedback sparingly.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 65

> More direct cultures tend to use what linguists call upgraders, words preceding or following negative feedback that make it feel stronger, such as absolutely, totally, or strongly: “This is absolutely inappropriate,” or “This is totally unprofessional.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 65

> By contrast, more indirect cultures use more downgraders, words that soften the criticism, such as kind of, sort of, a little, a bit, maybe, and slightly.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 66

> “Good evening again, ladies and gentlemen. This is Captain Eric Moody here. We have a small problem in that all four engines have failed. We’re doing our utmost to get them going and I trust you’re not in too much distress, and would the chief steward please come to the flight deck?”

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 72

> One rule for working with cultures that are more direct than yours on the Evaluating scale: Don’t try to do it like them.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 77

> The French have a saying, “Quand on connait sa maladie, on est à moitié guéri”—“When you know your sickness, you are halfway cured.” It applies to most cross-cultural confusions. Just building your own awareness and the awareness of your team goes a long way to improving collaboration.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 80

> when providing an evaluation, be explicit and low-context with both positive and negative feedback. But don’t launch into the negatives until you have also explicitly stated something that you appreciate about the person or the situation. The positive comments should be honest and stated in a detailed, explicit manner.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 89

> the ways you seek to persuade others and the kinds of arguments you find persuasive are deeply rooted in your culture’s philosophical, religious, and educational assumptions and attitudes. Far from being universal, then, the art of persuasion is one that is profoundly culture-based.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 93

> Principles-first reasoning (sometimes referred to as deductive reasoning) derives conclusions or facts from general principles or concepts.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 93

> with applications-first reasoning (sometimes called inductive reasoning), general conclusions are reached based on a pattern of factual observations from the real world.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 101

> Presenting to Londoners or New Yorkers? Get to the point and stick to it. Presenting to French, Spaniards, or Germans? Spend more time setting the parameters and explaining the background before jumping to your conclusion.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 104

> Patience and flexibility are key. Cross-cultural effectiveness takes time. Developing your own ability to recognize others' reactions and adapt accordingly will help you to be increasingly persuasive (and therefore effective) when working internationally.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 104

> Asians have what we refer to as holistic thought patterns, while Westerners tend to have what we will call a specific approach.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 105

> French and Germans (who see confrontation as a key aspect of the decision-making process) and Chinese (who see confrontation as an affront to team relationships).

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 109

> The Americans focus on individual figures separate from their environment, while the Asians give more attention to backgrounds and to the links between these backgrounds and the central figures.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 114

> have the innovation from the combination of cultures, while avoiding the inefficiency that comes with the clash of cultures.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 115

> the type of leader who is a facilitator among equals rather than a director giving orders from on high.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 116

> push power down in the organization and step out of the way.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 118

> No matter what your nationality, the answer is probably the same. Most people throughout the world claim to prefer an egalitarian style, and a large majority of managers say that they use an egalitarian approach themselves.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 118

> But evidence from the cross-cultural trenches shows another story. When people begin managing internationally, their day-to-day work reveals quite different preferences—and these unexpected, unconscious differences can make leading across cultures surprisingly difficult,

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> defined power distance as “the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations accept and expect that power is distributed unequally.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 137

> When all is said and done, humans are flexible. Most of the time, if managers take extra pains up front to discuss how they are going to communicate, many painful and costly faux pas can be avoided entirely. The problem comes when both parties proceed, as Rangan and Peterson did, as if their style was normal and the other party was wrong.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 139

> even when the boss is very wrong, he is still right.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 142

> In today’s global business environment it is not enough to be either an egalitarian leader or a hierarchical leader. You need to be both—to develop the flexibility to manage up and down the cultural scales.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 159

> focus on the quality and completeness of the information gathered and the soundness of the reasoning process.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 162

> awareness and open communication go a long way toward defusing conflict.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 168

> Cognitive trust is based on the confidence you feel in another person's accomplishments, skills, and reliability.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 168

> Affective trust, on the other hand, arises from feelings of emotional closeness, empathy, or friendship.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 175

> In peach cultures like the United States or Brazil, to name a couple, people tend to be friendly ("soft") with others they have just met.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 177

> In coconut cultures such as these, people are more closed (like the tough shell of a coconut) with those they don't have friendships with.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 178

> As a general rule of thumb, investing extra time developing a relationship-based approach will pay dividends when working with people from around the world. This is true even if you both come from task-based cultures, such as the United States and Germany. Once an affective relationship is established, the forgiveness for any cultural missteps you make comes a lot easier. So when you work internationally, no matter who you are working with, investing more time in building affective trust is a good idea.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 182

> the second scenario, show your nonprofessional self, is often the better approach when working with relationship-based cultures.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 184

> the business value of trust.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 185

> in many cultures, the relationship is your contract.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 186

> If you are from a task-based society and are hosting people from a more relationship-based society, put more time and effort into organizing meals to be shared.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 187

> Sharing meals is a meaningful tool for trust building in nearly all cultures.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 192

> the more you mimic the other person's e-mail style, the more likely your collaborator is to respond positively to you.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 198

> Confucian societies like China, Korea, and Japan, preserving group harmony by saving face for all members of the team is of utmost importance.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 199

> "In China, protecting another person's face is more important than stating what you believe is correct."

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 199

> "Harmony should be valued and quarrels should be avoided."

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 200

> students in the French school system are taught to reason via thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, first building up one side of the argument, then the opposite side of the argument, before coming to a conclusion.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 200

> In more confrontational cultures, it seems quite natural to attack someone's opinion without attacking that person.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 215

> have a solid and nuanced grasp on exactly where the line is drawn between acceptable debate and inappropriate attack.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 216

> allowing the students to question and disagree forcefully, while constantly reminding myself that this was a sign of engagement, not criticism.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 216

> don't try to mimic a confrontational style that doesn't come naturally to you.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 217

> putting a frame around her words—explaining her style of disagreeing before putting it into practice.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 218

> “To engage in conflict, one does not need to bring a knife that cuts, but a needle that sews.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 225

> Positions on the Scheduling scale are partially affected by how fixed and reliable, versus dynamic and unpredictable, daily life is in a particular country.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 228

> Cutting in line—even inadvertently—is a cultural crime in Sweden.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 233

> Style switching is an essential skill for today’s global manager.

Highlight (Yellow) | Page 249

> As you build your own awareness, you will be better able to act as a cultural bridge.
