

**Culture: The learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviors of a group of interacting people.**

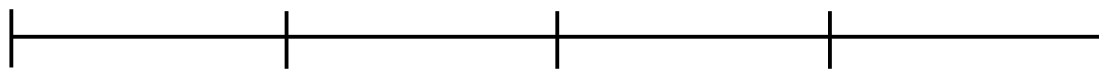
-M. Bennett.

**Culture groups tend to be unified by a shared common experience.**

-D. Cordova.

**Value: A thing or quality having intrinsic worth. Beliefs or standards. Webster's**

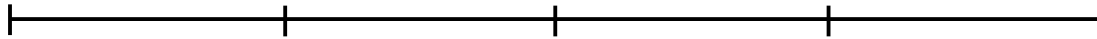
Freedom	Family	Education = success
Independence	Religion	Family
Self-Reliance	Relationships	Group harmony
Equality	Belonging	Age/seniority
Individualism	Group harmony	Group consensus
Money	Collectiveness	Cooperation
Competition	Age/seniority	Quality
Efficiency/Time	Group consensus	Humble
Directness	Value the past	Patience
Value the future	Cooperation	Indirectness
Risk-taking	Personal Pride	Respect Hierarchy, elders
Self-accomplishment	Work Pride	Nature
Winning	Respect elders	Treat everyone with respect
Family	Indirectness	Everyone is your teacher
Aggressiveness	Hard work	Religion/faith



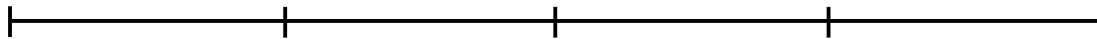
**Cultural Dimensions**  
 (The Building Blocks of Culture)

**“The values and beliefs associated with these dimensions are the source of/and explanation for a wide variety of behavior”**

~C. Storti



<b>Concept of Self</b>	
<b>Individualist</b>	<b>Collectivist</b>
One's identity is personal and individual, not a function on one's membership or role in a group; the self is the smallest unit of survival; looking out for one's self protects others; personal fulfillment is the greatest good; independence and self-reliance are highly valued; children are taught to stand on their own two feet; workers don't mind individual recognition.	One's identity is a function of one's membership/role in a primary group; the primary group, usually the family, is the smallest unit of survival; looking out for others protects one's self; group harmony is the greatest good; children are taught to depend on others, who in turn can always depend on them; employees don't like to stand out, they prefer group/team recognition;



<b>Importance of Face</b>	
<b>Less Important</b>	<b>More Important</b>
Telling the truth is more important than sparing someone's feelings; honesty is the best policy; it's okay to say no and to confront people; people don't worry much about saving face; getting/giving information efficiently is the primary goal of the communication exchange.	Preserving harmony and saving face are key concerns; the truth if it threatens harmony or someone's face, should be adjusted; one says what one thinks the other person wants to hear; it's not always proper to say no, disagree, or confront (that disturbs harmony); preserving/strengthening the personal bond is the goal of the communication exchange.



<b>Time</b>	
<b>Monochronic</b>	<b>Polychronic</b>
Time is a limited commodity; the needs of people are subservient to the demands of time; deadlines and schedules are sacred; plans are not easily changed; people may be too busy to see you; people live by an external clock.	Time is bent to meet the needs of people; there is always more time; schedules and deadlines are easily changed; plans are fluid; people always have time to see you; people live by an internal clock.



<b>Communication</b>	
<b>Direct</b>	<b>Indirect</b>
People say what they mean and mean what they say; there is no need to read between the lines; it's best to tell it like it is; people are less likely to imply and more likely to say exactly what they are thinking; yes means yes.	People don't always say what they mean or mean exactly what they say; you have to read between the lines; people are more likely to suggest or imply than to come out and say what they think you can't always tell it like it is (what if that upsets the other person?); yes may mean maybe or even no.

# Name That Gesture

Please give a brief definition of the following gestures.

1. Beckon with index finger.
2. Point at something in the room using index finger.
3. Make a "V" sign.
4. Smile.
5. Sit with sole of feet or shoe showing.
6. Form a circle with fingers to indicate "O.K."
7. Pass an item to someone with one hand.
8. Wave hand with palm facing outward to greet someone.
9. Nod head up and down to say "Yes."

Demonstrate the gestures below and ask participants to write down what they think each gesture means. Participants should also indicate if they think the gesture is considered rude in the United States. Have group discuss how body language could influence communication between cultures.

### **Answer Key for Body Language Activities**

Each of the following responses give a general guide to cultural differences in the meaning of gestures.

1. Beckon with index finger. This means "Come here" in the U.S. To motion with the index finger to call someone is insulting, or even obscene, in many cultures. Expect a reaction when you beckon to a student from the Middle or Far East; Portugal, Spain, Latin America, Japan, Indonesia and Hong Kong. It is more acceptable to beckon with the palm down, with fingers or whole hand waving.
2. Point at something in the room using index finger. It is impolite to point with the index finger in the Middle and Far East. Use an open hand or your thumb (in Indonesia)
3. Make a "V" sign. This means "Victory" in most of Europe when you make this sign with your palm facing away from you. If you face your palm in, the same gesture means "Shove it."
4. Smile. This gesture is universally understood. However, in various cultures there are different reasons for smiling. The Japanese may smile when they are confused or angry. In other parts of Asia, people may smile when they are embarrassed. People in other cultures may not smile at everyone to indicate a friendly greeting as we do in the United States. A smile may be reserved for friends. It is important not to judge students or their parents because they do not smile, or smile at what we would consider "inappropriate" times.
5. Sit with soles shoes showing. In many cultures this sends a rude message. In Thailand, Japan and France as well as countries of the Middle and Near East showing the soles of the feet demonstrates disrespect. You are exposing the lowest and dirtiest part of your body so this is insulting.
6. Form a circle with fingers to indicate "O.K." Although this means "O.K." in the U.S. and in many countries around the world, there are some notable exceptions:
  - In Brazil and Germany, this gesture is obscene.
  - In Japan, this means "money."
  - In France, it has the additional meaning of "zero" or "worthless."

8. Pass an item to someone with one hand. - In Japan this is very rude. Even a very small item such as a pencil must be passed with two hands. In many Middle and Far Eastern countries it is rude to pass something with your left hand which is considered “unclean.”
9. Wave hand with the palm facing outward to greet someone. In Europe, waving the hand back and forth can mean “No.” To wave “good-bye,” raise the palm outward and wag the fingers in unison, This is also a serious insult in Nigeria if the hand is too close to another person’s face.
10. Nod head up and down to say “Yes.” In Bulgaria and Greece, this gesture means “No.”