

JOINT MILITARY ATTACHÉ SCHOOL (JMAS)



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CULTURAL
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What Americans Are Like

These excerpts are from two booklets written to the foreign visitor explaining American values, one with the same title as this paper distributed by USIA and the other titled, The Values Americans Live By, by Robert Kohls, Director of International Programs, San Francisco State University.

Many United States citizens are not very knowledgeable about international geography or world affairs. They may ask uninformed questions about current events and may display appalling ignorance of world geography. Because the U.S. is not surrounded by many other nations, they tend to ignore the "rest of the world." Citizens of the United States call themselves "Americans." Other "Americans" - citizens of Mexico, Central and South America - often find the term inappropriate...however, Americans have been calling themselves this for more than 200 years.

As you read the typical traits listed below, remember that the U.S. society is composed of people from many social, cultural, ethnic and national backgrounds, different economic situations, and vastly different philosophies of life. Most Americans would have a difficult time telling, specifically, what the values are which define "Americans." In the end, most would decide not to answer because they believe that every individual is so unique that the same list of values could never be applied to all, or even most, of their fellow citizens (Individualism, #5).

Despite this self-evaluation, a foreign anthropologist could observe Americans and produce a list of common values which would fit most Americans. This list would stand in sharp contrast to the values commonly held by the people of many other countries. For example, when you ask Americans for directions to get to a particular address in their own city, they may explain, in great detail, how you can get there on your own but may never even consider walking a hundred meters with you to lead you to that place. Some foreign visitors have interpreted this sort of action as showing "unfriendliness," instead of the self-help concept (#6) that is so strong in Americans that they firmly believe that no adult would ever want, even temporarily, to be dependent on another. Also, their future orientation (#8) makes Americans think it is better to prepare others to find addresses on their own in the future.

Americans see all of these listed traits as very positive values. They are not

aware, for example, that the people of many countries view change (#2) as negative, destructive and threatening. In fact, all of these American values are judged by many of the world's citizens as negative and undesirable.

1. Responsibility/Personal Control Over the Environment

Americans no longer believe in the power of Fate, and they have come to look at people who do as being backward, primitive, hopelessly naive, superstitious and unwilling to take responsibility in pursuing a better life (lazy). In the U.S. people consider it normal and right that Humans should control Nature, rather than the other way around. It is considered normal that anyone should look out for his or her own self-interests first and foremost. Most Americans find it impossible to accept that there are some things which lie beyond the power of humans to achieve or control. Americans have literally gone to the moon, because they refused to accept earthly limitations. Americans seem to be challenged, even compelled, to do, by one means or another (and often at great cost) what 7/8 of the world is certain cannot be done.

2. Change Seen as Natural and Positive

In the American mind, change is seen as an indisputably good condition. Change is strongly linked to development, improvement, progress and growth. Many older, more traditional cultures consider change as a disruptive, destructive force, to be avoided if at all possible. Instead of change, such societies value stability, continuity, tradition, and a rich and ancient heritage -- none of which are considered very important in the U.S. These first two values (the belief that we can do anything and the belief that any change is good) together with an American belief in the virtue of hard work and the belief that each individual has a responsibility to do the best s/he can do have helped Americans achieve some great accomplishments. So whether these beliefs are "true" is really irrelevant; what is important is that Americans have **considered** them to be true and have acted as if they were, thus, in effect, causing them to happen.

3. Time and Its Control

Americans consider time of utmost importance and value punctuality. They keep appointment calendars and live according to schedules. To foreigners, Americans seem "always in a hurry" and this often makes them appear brusque instead of willing to develop deep interpersonal relationships. Americans are generally efficient and get a great many things done, simply by rushing around. Americans' language is filled with references to time. Time is something to be "on", to be "kept," "filled," "used," "spent," "wasted," "lost," "gained," "planned," "made the most of," even "killed." Many American proverbs stress the value in guarding our time, using it wisely, setting and working toward specific goals, and even expending our time and energy today so that the fruits of our labor may be enjoyed at a later time. (This latter concept is called "delayed gratification.")

4. Equality/Fairness

This is one of Americans' most cherished values, so important that they have given it a religious basis. They say all people have been "created equal." Most Americans believe that God views all humans alike without regard to intelligence, physical condition, economic status or rank. In secular terms this belief is translated into the assertion that all people have an equal opportunity to succeed in life, although they differ in opinion about how to make this ideal into a reality. This equality concept often makes Americans seem strange to foreign visitors since 7/8 of the world feels quite differently. To most of the world rank and status and authority are seen as much more desirable considerations -- even if they personally happen to find themselves near the bottom of the social order. Class and authority seem to give people in those other societies a sense of security and certainty. People outside the U.S. consider it reassuring to know, from birth, who they are and where they fit into the complex system called "society." Many highly placed foreign visitors to the U.S. are insulted by the way they are treated by service personnel (such as waiters in restaurants, clerks in stores, or hotels, taxi drivers, etc.) Americans have an aversion to treating people of high position in a deferential manner, and conversely, often treat lower class people as if they were very important, and most people try to treat everyone "just like anybody else."

5. Individualism/Privacy

Here, each individual is seen as completely and marvelously unique, that is, totally different from all other individuals and, therefore, particularly precious and wonderful. There are strong family ties and strong loyalties to groups, but individuality and individual rights are most important. Somehow, they believe they are just a little different, just a little unique, just a little special, from other members of the same group. If this seems like a selfish attitude, it also leads Americans to an honest respect for other individuals and an insistence on human equality. One does find a much greater variety of opinions (along with the absolute freedom to express those opinions anywhere and anytime) in this country so Americans think they are more individualistic than, in fact, they actually are. Almost all Americans will ultimately vote for one of the two major political parties in the next election.

Privacy, the ultimate result of individualism, is perhaps even more difficult for the foreigner to comprehend. The word "privacy" does not even exist in many non-Western languages. If it does, it is likely to have a strongly negative connotation, suggesting loneliness or forced isolation from the group. In the U.S., privacy is not only seen as a very positive condition, but it is also viewed as a requirement which all humans would find equally necessary, desirable and satisfying. It is not uncommon for Americans to say -- and to believe -- "If I don't have at least half an hour a day all to myself, I would go stark raving mad!"

6. Independence and Self-Reliance

Related to the respect for individuality are American traits of initiative and self-help. From an early age, children are taught to "stand on their own two feet," and "to

be independent." In the U.S. a person can take credit only for what s/he has accomplished by himself or herself without any outside assistance. Americans get no credit whatsoever for having been born into a rich family (an accident of birth). Americans pride themselves in having been born poor and climbing the difficult ladder of success all by themselves. The American social system has, of course, made it possible for them to move, relatively easily, up the social ladder, whereas this is impossible to do in many countries. People from other countries are often surprised to learn that most U.S. citizens follow their own careers, arrange their own marriages, etc., instead of following a parental plan.

Take a look in an English-language dictionary at the composite words that have the word "self" as a prefix. There will be more than 100 such words, such as self-aware, self-confident, self-conscious, self-control, self-defeating, self-denial, self-discipline, self-esteem, self-expression, self-importance, self-improvement, self-interest, self-reliance, self-respect, self-sacrifice -- the list goes on and on. The equivalent of these words cannot be found in most other languages. This is perhaps the best indication of how seriously Americans take doing things for one's self. The "self-made man or woman" is still very much the ideal in 20th century America.

7. Competition

Americans believe that competition brings out the best in any individual. This leads them to compete against each other, even on the youngest age levels. Very young children, for instance, are encouraged to answer questions for which their classmates do not know the answers. We find friendly and not-so-friendly competition everywhere. The American style of friendly joking or banter or "getting the last word in" and the quick witty reply are subtle forms of competition. Although such behavior is natural to Americans, many people from countries that promote cooperation find it overbearing or disagreeable.

Americans, valuing competition, have devised an economic system to go with it -- free enterprise. They feel very strongly that a highly competitive economy will bring out the best in its people and ultimately, that the society which fosters competition will progress most rapidly. Although often competitive, Americans also have a good sense of "teamwork", of cooperating with others to achieve a goal.

8. Future Orientation

Americans are sure that the future will inevitably bring improvements, but that means that they devalue the past and are, to a large extent, unconscious of the present. Even a happy present goes largely unnoticed because, happy as it may be, Americans have traditionally been hopeful that the future would bring even greater happiness. Almost all energy is directed toward realizing that better future. Since Americans have been taught that Humankind, and not Fate, can and should be the ones who control the environment, this has made them very good at planning and executing short-term projects. This ability, in turn, has caused Americans to be invited to all corners of the earth to plan and achieve the miracles that their goal-setting can produce. Those who come from a culture where talking about or

actively planning the future is felt to be futile, perhaps even sinful, have not only philosophical problems with this future orientation, but religious objections as well.

9. Action/Work Orientation

The U.S. is a highly active society, full of movement and change. Those used to a more leisurely pace may find the fast tempo exhausting; on the other hand, they may find it exhilarating. "Don't just stand there!" goes a typical bit of American advice. "Do something!" This expression in a sense, describes most Americans' entire waking life, where action - any action - is seen to be superior to inaction. People here think that it is "sinful" to "waste time sitting around doing nothing," or just to "daydream." This attitude has created many people who have come to be known as "workaholics" (people who are addicted to their work), who think constantly about their jobs and who are frustrated if they are kept away from them, even during their evening hours and weekends. And when such a person finally takes time off to go on vacation, even the vacation will be carefully planned, very busy and active. This workaholic syndrome, in turn, causes Americans to identify themselves wholly with their professions. The first question one American will generally ask another American when meeting them for the first time is "What do you do?" "Where do you work?" or "Who (what company) are you with?"

10. Informality

Americans like to dress informally, entertain informally and they treat each other in a very informal way, even when there is a great difference in age or social standing. Foreigners may consider this cross-generation, cross-class informality disrespectful, even rude, but it is a large part of U.S. culture. Although there are times when Americans are respectful of, even sentimental about tradition, in general, there is little concern for social ritual. One can go to a symphony performance in any large American city nowadays and find some people in the audience dressed in blue jeans and tieless, short-sleeved shirts. American greetings have changed from the more formal "How do you do?" to the informal "Hi." This is as likely to be used to one's superior as to one's best friend, as they would consider such informality a compliment!

Americans are friendly -- but in their own way. In general, friendships among Americans tend to be shorter and more casual than friendships among people from other cultures. This has something to do with American mobility and the fact that Americans do not like to be dependent on other people. Americans also tend to "compartmentalize" friendships, having "friends at work," "friends on the sports team," "family friends," etc.

11. Directness/Openness/Honesty

Honesty and frankness are more important to Americans than "saving face." They may seem blunt at times and they may bring up in polite conversation topics and issues which are embarrassing, too controversial, or even offensive to other cultures. Americans ask a lot of questions, some of which may seem pointless,

uninformed, or elementary to other cultures. They may ask very personal questions of someone they have just met. No impertinence is intended; the questions usually grow out of genuine interest. They are likely to be completely honest in delivering their negative evaluations, and to do so publicly. Americans are quick to get to the point and do not spend much time on formal social amenities. This directness encourages Americans to talk over disagreements and to try to patch up misunderstandings themselves, rather than ask a third party to mediate disputes. Anyone who chooses to use an intermediary to deliver a message will likely be considered "manipulative" and "untrustworthy." Silence makes Americans nervous. They would rather talk about the weather than deal with silence in a conversation.

Americans are trying to urge their fellow countrymen to become even more open and direct by a large number of "assertiveness" training courses. Americans consider anything other than the most direct and open approach to be "dishonest" and "insincere" and will quickly lose confidence in and distrust anyone who hints at what is intended rather than saying it outright.

12. Practicality/Efficiency

Americans have a reputation for being an extremely realistic, practical and efficient people. Will it make any money? Will it "pay its own way?" What can I gain from this activity? These are the kinds of questions which Americans are likely to ask in their practical pursuits, not such questions as: Is it aesthetically pleasing? Will it be enjoyable? or Will it advance the cause of knowledge? This practical, pragmatic orientation has caused Americans to contribute more inventions to the world than any other country in human history. The popular "trial and error" approach to problem-solving, invented in the U.S., suggests listing several possible solutions to any given problem, then trying them out, one-by-one, to see which would be most effective.

13. Materialism/Acquisitiveness

Foreigners generally consider Americans much more materialistic than Americans are likely to consider themselves. Americans would like to think that their material objects are just the "natural benefits" resulting from hard work and serious intent -- a reward, they think, which all people could enjoy were they as industrious and hard-working as Americans. But by any standard, Americans are materialistic. They value and collect more material objects than most of the world's people would ever dream possible to own. They give a higher priority to obtaining, maintaining and protecting their material objects than they do in developing and enjoying interpersonal relationships with people. The modern American typically owns: one or more color TVs, a tape recorder and record player, a VCR, an electric hair dryer, an electronic calculator, a camera, a clothes-washer and dryer, a vacuum cleaner, a lawn mower, a refrigerator, a stove, one or more automobiles, and a telephone. Many also own a personal computer, a CD player and electric dish-washer. Since Americans value newness and innovation, they sell or throw away their possessions frequently and replace them with newer ones. A car may be kept for only 2-3 years, a house for 5-6 before trading it in for another one.

CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

by Big World Media
www.bigworldmedia.com
(DVD video)

"All people are the same. It's only their habits that are different."

- Confucius

1. OVERVIEW

Key Points:

- Cultural awareness is essential in the global market
- Cultural traits are internal, and they change slowly.
 - o Look inward and identify your own cultural traits.
- Accept other cultures and make an effort to understand them.
 - o First step to cultural sensitivity is acceptance of our differences.
 - o Failure to understand our differences can damage relationships.
 - o Cross cultural communication is a learned behavior.
- Cultural patterns observed are only guidelines. Treat every person as an individual.

2. VALUES

Key Points:

- Values change slowly and are often based upon religion
- Some place strong emphasis on *accomplishment*, while others focus on *quality of life & family*.
- Certain societies value *competition*, while others value *cooperation & harmony*.
- *Doing oriented* cultures emphasize *accomplishment*; *Being focused* societies pride themselves on *family background and status*.

3. BELIEFS & VIEWPOINT

Key Points:

- Cultures differ in how they view *fate*.
 - o Some believe people can control events.
 - o Others believe that people have little control over events and time.
- Societies differ in their attitude toward *rules and laws*.
 - o Some believe rules are meant to be applied to all parties uniformly and were taught to follow the rules.
 - o Others learn that rules are guidelines -- flexible and made to be challenged.
- Societies differ in *cognitive styles* or ways of thinking.
 - o Some use *inductive* reasoning, focusing on the parts of an issue and building facts or specifics to reach general conclusions.
 - o Others use *deductive* thinking, focusing on the whole and starting with general concepts, principles or framework then move to specifics.

4. SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Key Points:

- Cultures vary in *group or individual orientation*.
 - o Some focus on individual needs, responsibilities, and accomplishments.
 - o Others place stronger emphasis on teamwork, share praise and blame, and have higher regard for the organization or family unit.
- Some regions are more *egalitarian*, while others are more *authoritarian*.
 - o Egalitarian societies try to live by the principle that "all men are created equal."

- Managers encourage feedback and are often highly accessible to subordinates
 - Authoritarian cultures place strong accent on social class, hierarchy, and family obligation.
 - Subordinates strive to please employer and will not question authority
- Building *personal relationships* is vital in many societies.
 - Business *is* personal. Personal relationships must be developed over time before business can often be transacted.
- The *roles of women* vastly differ across cultures.
 - Women may have difficulty gaining respect in professional settings in many countries.

5. TIME Key Points:

Cultures have varying perceptions of *TIME*.

- Emphasis is either on the *short term* or the *long term*
 - Time may be seen as either finite OR infinite and flexible
 - Some cultures hundreds and thousands of years old live for the present and plan longer-term.
- *Pacing* differs among societies
 - Some live and work at a swift pace while others value and strive for a slow pace.
 - Adapt to host culture's pace whenever possible.
- There are differing perceptions about the *appropriate use of time*.
 - Is it common to focus on one task at a time, OR accepted to attend to more than one issue or task at hand?
- *Deadlines* have varying meanings and importance in differing cultures.
 - They are established, respected and hold consequences for non-compliance in some societies.
 - In others, they are ambiguous, fluid, and considered artificial.

6. COMMUNICATION Key Points:

- Respect languages of others
 - Ask first before speaking English
 - Attempts to learn and use their language is always appreciated
- Communication patterns vary on whether they are *direct* or *indirect*.
 - Some admire directness; others find it offensive
 - Use of the word "no" is considered rude in some cultures
- Be aware that cultures vary in focus on the *content* (what is said) versus the *context* (how something is said).
 - For context-based cultures, body language plays a greater role.
 - Body language (e.g., gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, etc.) holds different meanings in different cultures. Become informed and sensitive to these meanings and their usage.

7. ETIQUETTE Key Points:

- *Formality* is highly valued and expected in some cultures, while informality is prized in others.
- Forms of *greeting* and proper use of *names* differ amongst cultures.



QUESTIONS TO ASK TO BETTER UNDERSTAND A CULTURE

A. FAMILY STRUCTURE

- Who is considered to belong in the family?
- What are the rights, roles and responsibilities of the members?

B. LIFE CYCLE

- What are the important stages, periods and transitions in life?
- What behaviors are inappropriate or unacceptable for children at various ages?

C. ROLES

- What roles are available to whom?
- How are roles acquired?

D. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- How do people greet each other?
- Who may disagree with whom?
- How are insults expressed?

E. COMMUNICATION

- What languages and dialects are spoken?
- What are the characteristics of speaking "well?"
- What roles, attitudes and personality traits are associated with particular aspects of verbal and nonverbal behavior?

F. DECORUM AND DISCIPLINE

- How do people behave at home and in public?
- What means of discipline are used? (home or workplace)

G. RELIGION

- What religions are practiced in the region of study?
- What religious roles and authority are recognized?
- What should an outsider not know or acknowledge knowing?

H. HEALTH AND HYGIENE

- How are specific illnesses treated?
- How are illness and death explained?

I. FOOD

- What is eaten, in what order, and how often?
- What are the rules for table manners, including offering foods, handling foods and discarding foods?

J. HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

- What holidays are observed? For what purposes?
- Which holidays are important for children?
- What cultural values are instilled in children during the holidays?

K. DRESS AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE

- **What significance does dress have for social identity?**
- **What is the concept and value of beauty and attractiveness?**

L. EDUCATION

- **What are the purposes of education? What kinds of learning are favored?**
- **What teaching and learning methods are used in the home?**
- **What are parental expectations for boys versus girls?**

M. TRAITS

- **What traits and attributes in oneself or others are important? Undesirable?**
- **What attributes in the world are considered important? Undesirable?**

N. HISTORY AND TRADITIONS

- **How are history and tradition passed on to the young?**
- **How do cultural understandings of history differ from written or “scientific” facts ?**

O. ART AND MUSIC

- **What forms of art and music are most highly valued?**
- **What forms of art and music are appropriate for children to perform or appreciate?**

P. TIME

- **What is the typical lifestyle pace?**
- **What is considered valuable use(s) of time?**

- What is considered “on time?” What is the importance of punctuality?
- How important is speed of performance?

Q. WORK AND PLAY

- What behaviors are considered “work?”
- What kinds of work are prestigious? Why?
- How do families “play?”

R. NATURAL PHENOMENA

- Who or what is responsible for rain, thunder, floods and hurricanes?
- Are behavioral taboos associated with natural phenomena?
- Are there traditions or celebrations associated with natural phenomena?

S. PETS AND ANIMALS

- Which animals are valued and for what reasons?
- What animals are considered appropriate as pets? Inappropriate?

T. EXPECTATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS

- Do parents expect and desire assimilation of children to the dominant culture, language or dialect?
- What cultural values are expected to be maintained despite the degree of formal education?

THIRD WORLD CROSS CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

The mark of a seasoned traveler is less a fluency in the local language than a facility in dealing with the various challenges posed by the THIRD WORLD to a citizen from the FIRST.

In particular, how does one gracefully handle being "rich?" Americans of even modest means appear very wealthy amid rapidly devaluating currencies. They dine in restaurants frequented only by the local upper class (and other tourists). They are besieged by people wanting to carry their bags and guide them through the tourist sites. There is the sudden realization that here they are able to afford just about everything. This is a great thrill.

Personal The more you blend in, the less you'll be a target. Unless you are at a beach resort, never wear shorts. T-shirts and tennis shoes or brightly colored "tourist" clothes make you stand out, as do cameras and knapsacks. Formality is appreciated, but women should dress neither too nicely nor too casually. One good strategy if you're in the market for a piece of clothing, such as a sweater, is to buy one soon after you arrive to help blend in.

How you carry yourself is also important. Try to look as if you know what you're doing and what you want. Try not to look wide-eyed, nervous or scared. Carry purses with straps not just over your shoulder, but around your neck. Wear minimal jewelry on the street.

Beggars For many people, there is no alternative to begging – they are sometimes on the edge of starvation. Women beggars almost always have children. They are in need, and they've crossed your path. Not giving will not discourage them. Nor will it make a big difference if you do give. If you're worried about them following you after your donation, give only to those who are sitting down – they're not going anywhere. A pittance from you can make their life easier. And you don't always need to give cash.

Bargaining In the U.S., the closest we get to bargaining is the sales offices of car dealerships. And we often hate it. In most of the world, however, any item without a price tag can be bargained for. You have a big strike against you right at the start, since even the most rustic basket weaver thinks that if you could afford the plane fare to get there, you can afford to buy a basket. First, let them know that you live there and are not a tourist so you can probably get the basket cheaper elsewhere. Secondly, treat merchants with respect. Don't just say, "How much?" Greet them with a smile, ask if they know English if you don't speak the language. Use sign language otherwise. If they accept a bid from you, even a ridiculously low one that you uttered to get them to quit following you, you are HONOR-BOUND to pay it and take the item.

Always count your change. Never accept a torn bill since, unlike in the U.S., many merchants will not take it. Carry some greenbacks with you since local

people can often get a better exchange for dollar bills than the Embassy people can. Experienced shoppers develop advanced techniques that can be a lot of fun. Have a “bored” spouse tugging on your sleeve if the bargaining isn’t going your way. Take the money out of your pocket to whet their appetite. Take a few steps away or let your eyes wander to the exit or to the next stall. And again, remember that if you make an offer and it is accepted, you are morally obligated to follow through and give them that amount.

Bribes

Americans bristle against paying bribes. But it is sometimes important to be able to grease a palm, discreetly and without compunction. The situation most commonly encountered may be the paying of the policeman’s “fine.” The act of soliciting or paying does not always have the same illegal connotation as in this country. If it is impossible to do something that you know is very possible, a “service fee” may make it suddenly possible. A “gift” of a magazine, or bottle of booze to someone who consistently is in your path and can make that path either difficult or easy, is something you should consider.

Tips

Tips are expected less in Third World countries, but leave them anyway. Ten percent is fine and they will remember you the next time. Read the menus to find out if the gratuity has been included. Many times it can be 20% or more, in which case a token is all that is needed.

Unsolicited Offers

Learn to ignore people who are offering things you are not looking for – shoeshines, cab rides, guide services, etc. Most Americans are in the habit of meeting the eyes of anyone who is trying to catch theirs. This doesn’t pay: Looking that salesman in the eyes – even if to say “no” – will raise false hopes and may cause him to follow you down the street. Look away, ignore; it’s better than misleading him.

Also, stop people who are doing things for you that you didn’t request, whether it’s carrying your luggage or hailing a cab. If you let them continue, they’ll expect to be paid. However, don’t be too shy about asking for assistance. It can usually be acquired quite cheaply and may be a great convenience.

Culture Shock

By Lee King

Life overseas can be an exciting adventure -- and a little overwhelming...

The big adventure is finally here -- the overseas tour you asked for, looked forward to, and couldn't wait to begin. So how come you're irritable, not sleeping well, losing (or gaining) weight and depressed? Welcome to the Culture Shock Zone.

Culture shock was first described in 1960 by sociologist Kalvero Oberg. He introduced the term to describe the feelings experienced by people moving to a foreign country and trying to function in an environment. Every year thousands of military personnel and their dependents do just that and they will all, without exception, suffer some degree of culture shock.

How much and for how long depends on a variety of factors. Irina Harris, a psychotherapist at the Center for Psychological Services in Rome, Italy, describes the type of individuals who might have the most difficulty: "People who place great value on routine can have problems. So will people who always need to be in control. Obviously, those who are fearful and reluctant to try anything new are going to have a hard time."

If you're heading overseas, or have just arrived, there are steps you can take to make culture shock a temporary headache rather than a long-term problem.

Perhaps the first thing you can do is understand that your feelings are normal. The psychological stress that people feel in trying to deal with an unfamiliar culture has been studied, described and documented by social scientists for many years. Their general theme has been that culture shock is a stress reaction to living in conditions that are uncertain and difficult to control or predict.

Of course military families have long been aware that their lifestyle is fraught with uncertainty. But even the most flexible individual, the one who can always "roll with the punches," is not immune to the stress caused by an overseas move.

One woman described what happened to her shortly after her family's arrival overseas. "I was feeling bad about a lot of things. We had left two grown children back in the States, my parents were getting older and my dad wasn't well, we'd sold a house I'd loved, I'd given up a good job -- I'd even given my dog to a friend. One day I was reading a magazine and came across one of those test-yourself quizzes. This one measured all the stress factors in your life. I couldn't believe it. I checked every box except 'death in the family' and 'divorce'-- and I was beginning to give serious thought to that one!"

Nearly everyone with orders for an overseas installation has to make some big changes before making the move. These changes can be heart wrenching and worrisome, or they can be exciting and joyful (like a marriage or a new baby). In either case, while you are making the adjustment to these new conditions, the added stress of trying to adapt to a foreign culture can set the scene for a difficult period. You begin to find the exotic food and unfamiliar surroundings aren't so exciting after all. In fact, you may wish you had never made this move. You're not alone.

Understanding your feelings and accepting them as normal are only the first steps toward overcoming culture shock. You can do a few things before you leave the States to ease the bumpy road ahead:

Make a sincere effort to get rid of any stereotype you have of the people in your host nation.

It's obvious that a negative stereotype is going to get in your way; but so will an unrealistically positive one. If you think all the native people will be cheerful clean, honest and romantic, then the first time you run into someone who is rude, sloppy, crafty or indifferent, you'll feel betrayed and disappointed. Remember that while the differences you encounter will be significant, the range of behavior is the same everywhere. In the United States we have boors and saints and everything in between, and so does every other society.

Have realistic expectations.

Perhaps you are going overseas with the intention of: (a) becoming fluent in the language, (b) doing a lot of traveling, (c) saving a lot of money, (d) working, if you're a spouse, or (e) all of the above. A positive attitude and an optimistic outlook are excellent tools in dealing with the overseas experience. But if you set too many goals and set them too high, you're apt to judge yourself too harshly when reality sets in. Talk to people who have been stationed there before you, get in touch with your sponsor, or make contact with your command. You may find that expenses are higher than you anticipated, or dependent jobs are scarce. If you have a realistic idea of what you can and cannot accomplish, you'll be better prepared to deal with disappointment.

Learn as much as possible about your host nation before you leave the States.

There are many resources available to you if you care to seek them out. Your local library will have information about the country. Talk to people who have traveled there, or a national of that country who is living in the United States. If you live near a college or university; there may be a faculty member who has lived in that country and would be more than happy to share his expertise with you. Your efforts will pay off not only in giving you some background knowledge, but also in the pleasure your host nationals will take in recognizing that you took the trouble to learn about them.

Make a real effort to learn the language.

Even a few "survival" phrases will help once you arrive. If nothing else, listen to some language tapes to accustom your ear to the sounds and rhythm of the language.

Even with all these precautions, you can still expect to suffer a letdown after the first few weeks. The usual symptoms, aside from a bad case of homesickness, can be compulsive eating or drinking, marital stress, family tension, vague physical ailments, irritability, and loss of ability to work effectively.

This pattern is, in fact, part of the four stages of culture shock. The first stage is euphoria. Your expectations are high; everything is exciting and new. After a month or two, however, the second stage is reached. This is where the differences lose their charm.

Annoyance fills your daily life. This stage can last anywhere from a few months to the end of your tour. If you try, however, you'll move into stage three. Now the culture becomes familiar and your previous despair at ever understanding it disappears. Your sense of humor returns. Finally, in stage four you have the ability to function confidently in two cultures. You have become bicultural.

Fortunately, culture shock is not a fatal disease. As you become better acquainted with your host country and make the effort to get to know the local people, your environment will seem less threatening. However, a few points worth remembering may help speed the process:

- ◆ ***You can't possibly do everything right.*** In other words, give yourself and those around you a little slack. Don't expect perfection where it's not possible.
- ◆ ***Adjust your time schedule.*** Allow extra time for traffic, getting lost or an unexpected demonstration. This will eliminate the stress of running late.
- ◆ ***Stay away from negative people.*** Chronic complainers flourish in adverse circumstances and each day brings a new litany of gripes and unhappy experiences. In their failure to adjust, they seek out reassurance that it's "us versus them." Find better company.
- ◆ ***Don't compare yourself to the eagerly adventurous.*** You may know someone who tears off each weekend, guidebook in hand, and returns with enthusiastic descriptions of his discoveries. Good for him. Don't feel guilty if your idea of enjoying the culture doesn't match his. Find whatever pleasure suits you, even if it's only taking a daily stroll through a favorite area or a regular meal at a friendly restaurant.

THE STAGES OF CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

STAGE ONE: ENTHUSIASM/EXCITEMENT

The individual: is very positive about the culture.
is overwhelmed with impressions.
finds the culture exotic and is fascinated by it.
is largely passive; doesn't confront the culture.

STAGE TWO: WITHDRAWAL/LONELINESS

The individual: begins to interact with the culture.
finds the behavior of the people unusual and unpredictable.
begins to react to the behavior/dislike the culture.
feels anxiety and stress.
begins to withdraw.
begins to criticize the culture/people.
wants to go home.

STAGE THREE: RE-EMERGENCE/ADJUSTMENT

The individual: begins to understand the behavior of the people.
feels more comfortable living in/encountering the culture.
feels less isolated.
regains his/her sense of humor.

STAGE FOUR: ACHIEVEMENT/ENTHUSIASM

The individual: enjoys being in the culture.
functions easily in the culture.
prefers certain host country behavior to that of own culture.
adopts certain behaviors.

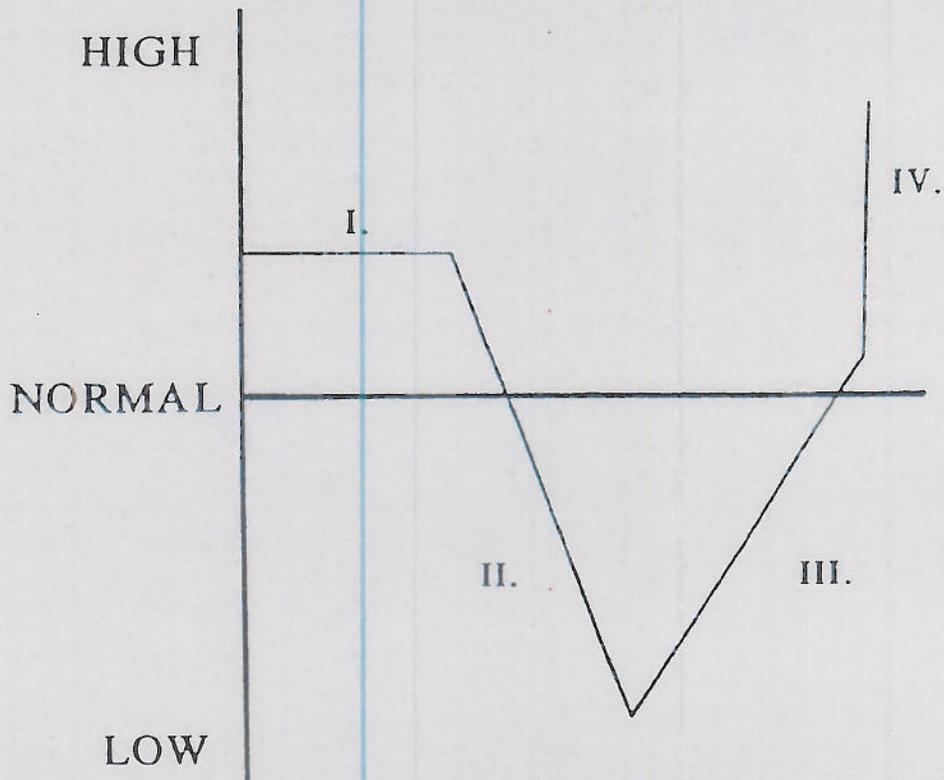
SYMPTOMS OF STRESS & CULTURE SHOCK

appetite changes
hostility toward locals
increased alcohol intake
difficulty sleeping

irritability
lethargy
withdrawal
depression

boredom
increased passivity
excessive sleeping
inability to concentrate

THE STAGES OF ADJUSTMENT



- I. Enthusiasm/Excitement
- II. Withdrawal/Loneliness
- III. Re-emergence/Adjustment
- IV. Achievement/Enthusiasm

TECHNIQUES FOR ENHANCING CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

1. Try to cultivate the proper attitude:

- It's normal to feel overwhelmed.
- Have limited expectations of yourself in the beginning.
- You have done this before and survived.

2. Take care of yourself physically:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Eat properly.
- Stay fit.
- Get away from it all; read, play, relax.

3. Find a mentor.

4. Don't withdraw into yourself; seek out others.

5. Keep in touch with family/friends back home.

6. Try to learn the language.

7. Reach out beyond the expatriate community.

Winning Ways for the Traveler

When it comes to communicating across cultures, the good intentions of the business or leisure traveler are useful, but they are not always enough.

Upholding a few basic principles, though, can go a long way to making friends rather than enemies.

1. Know the country

Ignorance about the country you are visiting can be a critical barrier to communication, especially where business is at stake. Not knowing about the geography, form of government, even names of government leaders, can be interpreted as apathy and disrespect towards their culture.

Imagine doing business with a foreigner in Singapore who wants to know what you will do in 1997 when Singapore reverts to Chinese rule. The foreigner's ignorance will imply that your country is inferior and unimportant in his eyes. This may have a negative effect on your business relationship.

So here is tip No.1: Whenever you plan to travel to a foreign country, study its geography, culture, politics and social system. Learn about its people's interests, their historical figures and their religions. Buy a book or a tourist video. Visit a library or the country's embassy and look for brochures and booklets.

If it is going to be a long stay, make the effort to learn some of the language. If you do your homework, it may just make the difference between success and failure if you are doing business there.

2. Be flexible

I will always remember the December afternoon in Yangzhou, China, about four years ago when I went with a Chinese friend to buy a plane ticket.

Behind the counter sat a man reading a book and drinking tea from a glass jar. When we told him that I needed a ticket for Jan 6, he said that the woman to see was at lunch.

We watched the man read his book for 20 minutes before we left to run some other errands. When we returned, he said that the woman was now at the department store across the street. Again we waited, again we left.

When we returned the third time, the woman said, "I'm sorry, I sell tickets for odd days, even days are sold in the other office across town."

We reached the other office half an hour before closing time. There were three people behind the counter talking with each other. My hopes brightened. But then, we were told that the ticket seller was at the post office. We waited until closing time but the seller never returned. This is a difficult pill to swallow for someone from an efficient, high-tech society.

In Singapore, I could have bought a plane ticket in five minutes with a telephone call

and a credit card. In China, it took four hours to accomplish nothing.

In a situation like this, it is easy to form a negative attitude about the culture of the country that we are visiting.

But a negative attitude will do nothing but result in strained relations.

Instead, we need the ability to laugh at the situation. We need to drop our high expectations and relax.

In other words, we need to be flexible. The essence of the ugly foreigner is inflexibility, and at the root of inflexibility is an attitude of cultural arrogance that says, "My culture is right, your culture is backward."

I hope that some day, China will be as efficient as Singapore. But for our own sanity in cross-cultural situations and for the sake of courtesy and friendship between nations, we have to realize that we, alone, are not capable of changing the host culture.

Here then, is tip No.2: Try not to make the people of the country you visit live up to your standards. When something troubles you about their culture, do not grumble and be judgmental.

Author and cross-cultural expert Robert Kohls gives this suggestion: adopt an investigative attitude. Seek out the cause of the behavior.

At the very least, you will find your stay in that culture much more enjoyable. But in some cases, you may even find that you are the one who needs to change!

3. Focus on Individuals

Before I visited France, I heard that the French were snobs. Truthfully, I met quite a number of them who fit the stereotype.

In fact, because I had been alerted, I was subconsciously looking for behavior that would prove it true.

Fortunately, something happened which not only broke my image of "the snobbish Frenchman," but opened my eyes to one of the biggest barriers to cross-cultural communication.

I was hitch-hiking along a road in northern France when three elderly Frenchwomen stopped to give me a ride.

When I told them that I needed a lift to the train station, they asked if I had visited the American War Memorial. I said that I had hoped to, but had run out of time.

"Oh, you must see it," said the woman driver. "Many of your people died to help us - you really must see it."

They drove me to the train station and helped me buy a ticket. Seeing that I had 1 1/2 hours before my train departed, they insisted that I visited the memorial with them.

They drove me 20 minutes to the site, gave me 20 minutes to walk around the cemetery, and then drove me back to the train station.

I boarded the train with less baggage than I had carried to France: I left my stereotypes buried in the soil of the war memorial.

So, tip No.3 is: Focus on individuals, not the society as a whole. Do not let generalizations interfere with your rational judgment. Treat people as individuals first, nationals second.

Finally, negative stereotyping will sour your experience faster than you can say the words "culture shock".

4. Try the food

Anyone who has lived in a foreign culture knows that there is no greater element that brings out the beast in people living overseas than our daily bread.

We can fake flexibility and tolerance in every arena, but it is impossible at the dinner table. Food is the litmus test for cultural arrogance, the crucible of the ugly foreigner.

When my students in Chengdu treated me to a steamboat meal featuring pig's brain, curdled blood, and live, slithering eel, I was being put to the test.

If I had failed the test by refusing to eat, I would not have formed the close friendships that I soon enjoyed.

They were so proud of their teacher for trying their most exotic dishes while some of his colleagues were back in their rooms scraping the bottom of peanut butter jars.

Most of us know what it is like to introduce a foreigner to our own food. We hope they will like it because it is part of our cultural identity.

If a foreigner tries the food placed before him and says subtly and politely that he does not like it, the host will not mind. "At least he tried it," the host will think.

But there is nothing worse than watching a grown person screw up his face in disgust and refuse to eat something.

Tip No.4: Try the food before making a judgment. Show your openness and willingness to accept the foreign culture. If you have a weak stomach, eat first and ask what it is later!

Eating the local food not only gives you a true taste of the culture, but it gives you plenty of stories to tell when you return home.

My parents will never forget the time I wrote from China to say that I finally had my first dog after a childhood without pets - and boy, did it taste good!

5. **Watch body language**

Non-verbal signals play an important role in daily communication.

Even a simple gesture like the nod of a head can cause confusion in some cultures. This nearly universal affirmative signal in fact says no in countries such as Greece and Bulgaria.

And if you ever do business with Arabs, be sure to keep your feet on the ground. If you cross your legs in such a way that the sole of your shoe faces the Arab, you will send the signal that you consider him beneath you, as worthless as a cigarette butt on the sidewalk.

Tip No.5: Learn about non-verbal signals before you go. Do not assume that the gestures you use are universal.

Seek out nationals of the country you are visiting and ask them questions about non-verbal cues.

6. **Watch your language**

This tip applies to countries you may travel to that speak the same language that you speak.

When my wife (a Singaporean) and I (an American) first married, we found that although we shared a common language, we sometimes used the language in different ways.

For example, when she told me to "keep" the broom, she meant put it back where it belonged. My response, "Of course I will keep it - there's no need to throw it away."

And when my wife said "toilet", she meant a room called the "toilet". But to me, "toilet" meant the bowl in that room.

When I asked her once where she put the hairbrush, she replied, "It's in the toilet." Immediately an image of our hairbrush sitting in the toilet bowl came into my mind.

Now, I am so used to calling that room the "toilet" that when I am back in the US, I forget sometimes.

Once, I asked a young employee in the Minneapolis airport where the toilet was. He laughed out loud. It is a "restroom" there.

Tip No.6: You may speak the same language but do not assume that you will understand one another automatically.

Cross-cultural communications is hard work, even when you share the same language. The best way to limit misunderstanding is to observe the way the people in your host country use the language, and ask questions when you perceive a misunderstanding.

7. Social boundaries

When my Chinese friend met me on his college campus two years after I had been his teacher, he was very excited to see me. We had become closer over the years as we wrote letters regularly.

My natural American reaction was to give him a big hug - but I knew this was not the custom in China.

So we greeted one another with a handshake. My friend then took my hand in his, laced his fingers in mine and held my hand as we walked across campus.

This, of course, was quite beyond my social boundary and made me nervous.

But I understood that I was on his turf, and so I should play by his rules.

Holding my hand was his way of telling me we were good friends - the same message I would have intended with a big bear hug.

If I had pulled my hand away, I would have sent the message that we were not close friends.

Tip No.7: Learn the social boundaries of the host culture. Do they kiss, hug, shake hands or bow? Do they take off their shoes before entering the home?

Do they arrive on time for social functions or is it the custom to arrive late?

What is considered personal information and should therefore not be brought up in conversation? Can you ask how much someone paid for her dress or briefcase or home?

8. What is courtesy?

Before I went to China for the first time, I learned that it is polite to refuse compliments.

There were times on the basketball court or the soccer field where someone would tell me what a good player I was.

I had to catch myself before I blurted out an American "thank you." Instead, I said, "No, my skills are very poor," or, "I'm really not very good."

In my own culture, this would sound like fake modesty.

Tip No.8: Learn what politeness is in the country you visit.

Do not assume that courtesy is courtesy no matter where you go. And do not judge another culture until you learn the motivations and intentions behind peoples' actions.

Before you leave Singapore, talk to foreign nationals living here or Singaporeans who have lived in the country you intend to visit.

Once there, get to know a friendly local willing to help you understand his culture. Obviously, you can never learn everything about a foreign culture before you leave home.

But if you expect differences, and if you remain flexible and positive, you will certainly open the door for successful cross-cultural communication.

This said, however, I must warn you to be ready for some surprises.

Once, when I visited a colleague in China, he offered me a cup of tea. I, being a flexible, informed international traveler, had done my homework.

I knew that it is rude in Chinese culture to accept immediately something that is offered to you. So I said, "No thank you," even though I was thirsty.

I expected him to offer it a few times before I finally accepted.

But my newfound friend had done his homework too. He knew that when an American says "no" an American means no. You guessed it - I went thirsty.

This article was originally printed in the Singapore Straits Times, the English language daily of Singapore.

Jeff Partridge is a Lecturer in Language and Communication at Temasek Polytechnic in Singapore. Born in the USA, he has traveled in Europe, the US, Canada, Mexico and parts of Asia and Australia over the past 12 years. He taught in China for two months in 1988 and for a year in 1989-90.

HINTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MOVE

1. Take time to say goodbye. Take time to be aware of your own feelings about leaving as well as your expectations about your time in your new country.
2. Anticipate as many changes as possible in the upcoming move and plan ahead for them. This should also include preparing a will and leaving a power of attorney with someone you trust.
3. Select books about your country and language guides to take with you.
4. Identify those friends who would be willing to mail packages to you.
5. Prepare for the continuation of what is important to you (books, music, magazine subscriptions, games, etc.).
6. Remember what worked for you before at times of change or crisis. Try to avoid what did not work well.
7. Remember that moving and the cross-cultural adjustment process, while exciting, can also lead to feelings of confusion, boredom, fatigue and anxiety during the getting-settled period. These are normal reactions and will pass with time.
8. Deal with the stress of moving and being in a new environment by taking care of yourself. Of primary importance will be having a "buddy" - someone you can trust.
9. Be prepared to try new things - language, making new friends, trying new foods, etc.
10. Be kind to yourself (and to those with whom you live and work). Don't expect overnight changes and acceptance. Reach out for support from others in your new community.

WAYS TO BECOME MORE FAMILIAR WITH THE NEW COUNTRY

People as Resources:

Host country national employees of mission
Long-time American or foreign residents
Neighbors
Children's host country teachers and family's language teacher
Follow-up on contacting friends-of-friends and families of foreign students or foreign visitors you hosted while still in Washington
Household employees

Organizations:

Binational centers and associations
Churches
College and alumni groups
Association of American University Women
International or American spouse groups
International organizations
Attache Association

Programs and Activities:

Post orientation program
University courses, lectures, library
Language study
Study groups: museum, arts and crafts, history and culture
Movies, theater, concerts, radio and TV
Tours of the city and country
Local markets and shops
Restaurants, local foods
Join a special interest group or share your special skills
Sporting events as spectator or participant
Cultural programs, celebrations, festivals
Exchange programs
Participants in orientation of students
USIS programs

Published Material:

Local newspapers, periodicals
Tour books, handbooks published by women's or church groups, local cookbooks
Host country literature: novels, short stories, histories
Subscriptions to US publications, International Herald Tribune



DEFENSE ATTACHE SYSTEM
Attache Spouse Program

CULTURE SHOCK - Stages and Symptoms

	PRE-DEPARTURE	1st Month	2nd Month	3rd Month/4th Month	5th Month	6th Month	24th Month
GENERAL ATTITUDES		Exhilaration Carnival	Reverence, Disenchantment Restless, Impatient	Discouragement/Recovery	Gradual	Normal	Slack-off Phase
SIGNIFICANT EVENTS	Planning Packing Processing Partying Parting	Red Carpet Welcome New Office New Colleagues Temporary or Permanent Quarters Exploration of Sights and Shops Duty Familiarization	Language Study Housekeeping, Servants Full-Duty Responsibilities MSG perhaps delayed Unfamiliar Sounds (esp. night) Smells, Food, Jibberish, Manners Need to Face Cost of Living Local Travel Complications	Language Study diminished (May Stop) Drifts to U.S. Recreational Centers - Thanksgiving/ Christmas Winter/Summer Abortive in Duty Performance	May Resume Language Study Acceptable Duty Performance	Normal Duty Performance Spring (?)	Disinterest in Local Affairs Anticipation of Next Activity
EMOTIONAL RESPONSE	Excitement Enthusiasm Some Trepidation of Unknown Concern About Leaving a. Family, Friends, Lovers b. Familiar Environment	Stimulate Sense of Mission Tourist Enthusiasm	Quests, Uncertainty Restlessness, Irritability Search for Security In Familiar Activities (Homeaking, Church clubs) ...The Beginning of Withdrawal	Discouragement, Bewilderment Suspicion of Servants Concern for Sanitation (Water, Food, Body, Air) Homesickness	Seeking Interest or Resignation	Emotional Equilibrium	Home Planning: Travel Household, Packing, New Locations, Schools Turning Over Job Decrease in Production even disinterest
ATTITUDINAL RESPONSE	Anticipation Slack-off of interest in Current Responsibilities	Outward Curiosity for Nationals Sublimation of Negative Stereotypes of Local National until 3rd Month Job Enthusiasm Enthusiasm for Colleagues	Neutral Towards Environment Scepticism, Uncertainty Frustration Question Values (of people, self, and job) (Occasionally loudmouthed, moral relaxation, increased alcohol)	Rebels from contact with local populace Withdrawal, Introspective Antagonistic, hypercritical Fear of Theft, Injury, Cheating Cheating Contaminations, "Tropical Stare" Antipathy for host country experiences Invocation of Stereotypes	Emerging Constructive Attitudes or Accommodation	Equilibrium	(Note: Occasionally, but not frequently, this is a High Production Phase)
PHYSICAL RESPONSE	Tired, But Normal Health (Occasionally pre-experience rejection manifested by illness)	Intestinal Disturbances Minor Insomnia	Colds, Headaches Occasional-to-frequent sick calls Pseudo-menopause (1-6 months)	Sick Leave	Normal Health		

Courtesy of FSI Workshop for Foreign Service Families, 1976

ONLINE CULTURAL TRAINING RESOURCE FOR STUDY ABROAD



Users Index for "What's Up With Culture?" Website

<http://www.pacific.edu/culture>

Listing of Modules, Features, Critical Incidents/Tales from the Peace Corps, and Bibliographies

Module 1 – What to Know Before You Go

- 1.1 If you are Going Abroad Soon...
- 1.2 Culture: The Hidden Dimension
 - 1.2.1 The Iceberg
 - 1.2.2 Linking Values to Behavior
 - 1.2.3 More on Culture: Defined & Refined
- 1.3 Culture: Yours, Ours and Theirs!
 - 1.3.1 Culture Distinctions
 - 1.3.2 In the Mind of the Beholder
 - 1.3.3 Sharing the Rewards
 - 1.3.4 Individualist or Collectivist?
 - 1.3.5 Score Yourself!
- 1.4 Whose Fault? Why Values Matter
 - 1.4.1 An Accident
 - 1.4.2 Personal and Societal Obligations
 - 1.4.3 Universalist or Particularist? Score Yourself!!
 - 1.4.4 Your Time or My Time
 - 1.4.5 The Concept of Time
 - 1.4.6 Context of Cultures: High and Low
- 1.5 Packing Up!
 - 1.5.1 The Things We Say
 - 1.5.2 US-American Values
 - 1.5.3 Cultural Categories Compared
 - 1.5.4 Sources of US-American Culture
- 1.6 Communication Across Cultures. What are They Trying to Say?
 - 1.6.1 The Body Speaks
 - 1.6.2 Public and Private Space
 - 1.6.3 Communication Styles
 - 1.6.4 Intensity Factors
- 1.7 Surprises and Shocks
 - 1.7.1 Common Reactions
 - 1.7.2 The Four Levels of Cultural Awareness
 - 1.7.3 Ten Transition Tips

Module 2 – Welcome Back! Now What?

- 2.1 Preparing to Come Home
- 2.2 If you are Preparing to Return Home Soon...
- 2.3 Back Home: Neither Here nor There
 - 2.3.1 Returning Home
 - 2.3.2 If you have returned home from abroad
 - 2.3.3 Ten Top Tips
 - 2.3.4 Ten Top Challenges
- 2.4 What Did You Learn Abroad?
 - 2.4.1 Seventy-Five Long-Term Outcomes
- 2.5 Say No to Shoeboxing
 - 2.5.1 Twelve Tips for Welcoming Returnees Home
 - 2.5.2 Remaining Time in School

Module 3 – Glossary/Bibliography

- Glossary
- Bibliography: Students Guide
- Bibliography: Training/Teaching

Features

1. Introductions to site for:

Parents – Welcome Page, scroll to bottom and click on “If you are a parent/guardian/supporter/of a study abroad student, please read this” (<http://www3.uop.edu/sis/culture/File/noteparents.htm>)

Study Abroad Professionals - Welcome Page, scroll to bottom and click on “If you are involved in study abroad program as a staff or faculty member, please read this” (<http://www3.uop.edu/sis/culture/File/notefaculty.htm>)

2. Student Anticipation and Expectation Exercises:

- a. For students who are about to go abroad see Anticipation and Expectation Exercise A – located in Section 1.1 - If you are Going Abroad Soon
- b. For students currently overseas AND who filled out Exercise A (above) they should go to Anticipation and Expectation Exercise B – Located in 2.2 - If You Are Preparing to Return Home Soon, and then go onto Exercise C (description follows below)
- c. For all students who are about to return home (pre-reentry) they should go to Anticipation and Expectation Exercise C – also located in 2.2 - If You Are Preparing to Return Home Soon.
- d. For all students who have already returned home (post-reentry) they should go to Anticipation and expectation Exercise D – located in 2.3.2 - If You Have Returned Home from Abroad

3. Knowledge Assessment Exercises

Throughout the website there are what we call Knowledge Assessment Exercises where users are invited to respond to questions about that sections' topics. Some of these are 'fill-in-the-blanks' type, some involve making a choices, some are 'matching' kinds of exercises; all of them are designed to assess how well the viewer is understanding the relevant terms and concepts. There are some thirty of these and interactive examples/samples can be found in the following sections:

- Iceberg exercise 1.2
- Linking values to behavior exercise 1.2.2
- Categories of behavior exercise 1.3.2
- Sharing the rewards exercise 1.3.3

4. Critical Incidents/"Tales from the Peace Corps"

CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Module # and Title	Critical Incident Name	Location	Student/PCV
1.2.1 - The Iceberg	I Just Asked for a Napkin!	London, England	Female 20
	Potty Stop in the Bush	Madagascar	Female 21
1.3.2 - In the Mind of the Beholder	Thank You Very Much. Syntax Matters! (PC Tale)	Scotland	Program Director
1.3.4 - Individualist or Collectivist	Jogging Alone (PC Tale)	Dominican Republic	Female PCV
1.4.4 - Your Time or My Time	Time and Space Warps (PC Tale)	Guinea (W. Africa)	Female PCV
1.4.6 - Context of Cultures: High and Low	When a Greeting Takes More Than "Hi, How are you?" (PC Tale)	Guinea (W. Africa)	Female PCV
	Book learning	Dharamsala, India	Female 20
	Picture (Im)Perfect Moment	Bali, Indonesia	Female 20
1.5.3 - Cultural Categories Compared	Where There's a Will (PC Tale)	Tangiers, Morocco	Male PCV
1.6.1 - The Body Speaks	Friendly Hugs	Beijing, China	Female 19
	Smiles	London, England	Female 19
	Flipping the Sign	Limerick, Ireland	Female, 19
	Friendly Conversation	Amman, Jordan	Male 21
	Dinner Time	Seville, Spain	Male 21
1.6.2 - Public and Private Space	Greeting Kisses	Sao Paulo, Brazil	Female 20
1.6.4 - Intensity Factors	Take Out	Osaka, Japan	Male 20
1.7.3 - Ten Transition Tips	London Taxi	London, England	Female 21
	Train in the Rain	Copenhagen, Denmark	Female 21
	German Dinner Party	Freiburg, Germany	Female 21

5. Student Self-Assessment Instruments/Inventories:

- a. Individualism vs. Collectivism found in - Section 1.3.5 - Score Yourself!!
- b. Universalist or Particularist found in - Section 1.4.3 - Universalist or Particularist? Score Yourself!!
- c. Cultural Context Inventory (High vs. Low Context) in - Section 1.4.6 - Context of Cultures: High and Low
- d. Intensity Factors Index (and Exercise) in - Section 1.6.4 - Intensity Factors
- e. Long term Outcomes from Study Abroad in- Section 2.4.1- Seventy-Five Long-Term Outcomes

6. Resources (all available in Module 3):

- a. Glossary
- b. Student's Guide Bibliography
- c. Training and Teaching Bibliography - including Cultural Simulations for Study Abroad Training

7. Evaluation Questionnaire Form:

An evaluation questionnaire is available at http://www.eclass.net/uop/uop_eval.html. It permits additional comments to be added under each question if the respondent so desires

Prepared by Professor Bruce La Brack, Ph.D., School of International Studies, University of the Pacific, Stockton, California for distribution at the 10th Annual Families in Global Transition Conference, Houston, Texas, March 6-8, 2008. Questions, comments and suggestions regarding this resource are welcome. I can be contacted via email at <blabrack@pacific.edu>, by phone at (209) 946-2102 and by mail at 3601 N. Pacific Avenue, Stockton, California, USA 95211.

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