

# Man 4102 class project part 1

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MAN 4102 CLASS PROJECT PART 1 Karen McCarthy Hawn Student, State College of Florida MAN 4102 Class Project Part 1 Per the digital document from Contemporary Authors (Biography), by Thomson Gale, (2004) Gerard Hendrik Hofstede was born October 2, 1928. He is the son of Gerrit and Evertine Hofstede. He married Maaïke A. Van den Hoek on the 4th of June, 1955 and had four children.

He graduated from Delft Institute of Technology in 1953 and Groningen University, Ph D (cum laude) in 1967. His work history began in 1953 as a lieutenant in the Netherlands Army. In 1955 and 1965 included management consultant for Bernschot Consultants and Stork Machine Works, plant manager for Jovanda Hosiery Co. , production manager of weaving for Menko Textile Co. , and director of staff services for IBM (Gale, 2004).

After leaving IBM in 1965 he began his career in research and education and was employed with European Education Center as the manager of personnel research through 1971, IMEDE Management Development Institute as visiting lecturer through 1973, European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management as professor of organizational behavior through 1979, Fassin Europe as director of human resources through 1983, and then served as dean at Semafor Senior Management College (Gale, 2004).

Hofstede also held several international university positions as a visiting professor or scientist throughout Europe until he assumed his position at University of Limburg in Netherlands. He held the position of director of Institute for Research on Intercultural Cooperation (IRIC) through 1980 and currently is the professor of organizational anthropology and international management (Gale, 2004). The biography listed Geert H. Hofstede as the <https://assignbuster.com/man-4102-class-project-part-1/>

author on 9 books, contributor on 14 books, and as a contributor to numerous articles to various socialscience, professional, and management journals in over seventeen countries to date (Gale, 2004).

On his website, Geert Hofstede, discusses the reasons he feels that culture is so important (Hofstede, 2012). Hofstede's ideas are based on the premise that people share common human nature and as such the shared human nature of all groups is very social, Hofstede (2012). That all groups use empathy and language, all practice collaboration, and all exhibit intergroup competition (Hofstede, 2012). How we all do these things while still being a good member of our various groups is what defines what Hofstede calls the unwritten rules of culture.

These cultures include symbols, rituals, laws, taboos, and religions that drive the groups "moral circle" (Hofstede, 2012). Per Hofstede, (2012) there are said to be unconscious values that change at a slower pace than those of the practices of each group. Hofstede categorizes these groups based on national boundaries, ethnic boundaries, religion, occupation, or academic disciplines and states that the groups are typically classified as either inferior or superior to our own groups (Hofstede, 2012).

To get things done we all need to have skills for cooperating across cultures and that enable us to cooperate with members of the globalized world. This concept is addressed in his Hofstede's book, (Hofstede, Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations. , 2001) and was the outcome of his research during the IBM study. He analyzed employee value scores that were collected between 1967

and 1973 from IBM employees in 70 countries and from this he established the paradigm of cultural dimensions. (Itim International, 2012).

In his interview for his biography, Gerard H. Hofstede told CA: Cultures Consequences is my chef d'oeuvre. It deals with differences in thinking and acting among otherwise similar people in many different countries, which was the right subject at the right time. Correspondence with readers about it has become one of my regular side activities (Gale, 2004, page 2). Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions In the course textbook Hofstede's five dimensions of culture are used to categorize behaviors in different cultures and explain why they differ (Phatak, Bhagat, & Kashlak, 2009).

The IBM study of employees from the 70 countries was the basis for the dimensions and has been criticized since there was only one company in the data set however, Hofstede's belief was that using just one company would better reveal the national differences. According to the authors Phatak, Bhagat, and Kashlak (2009), he believed this because the IBM employees were the same in other respects like type of work, job descriptions, and education. This study has been stated to be the most comprehensive study of how values are influenced in the workplace (Itim International, 2012).

Itim International, (2012) noted that Hofstede's work established a paradigm in international economics, communication, and cooperation, from which Hofstede developed the first empirical model of "dimensions" for national organizational culture. The first dimension is Individualism and Collectivism. These are social patterns under which beliefs, attitudes, norms, and values are then organized into one theme. Some countries practice individualism

and the members of society are motivated by their own needs and preferences above the needs of the group.

In contrast, countries that practice collectivism are much more closely linked as a group and are motivated by the obligations that are considered norms for the group. Hofstede felt that countries with higher higher per capita gross national product (GNP), were likely countries that would exhibit more individualism than countries with lower per capita gross national product (Phatak, Bhagat, & Kashlak, 2009). The next cultural dimension, Power Distance, is expressed as the extent to which less powerful members of society, institutions, or organizations accept that power will be distributed unequally.

Countries with small power distance have subordinates that show a limited amount of dependence on their bosses, there is a relationship based on interdependence, and a preference for consultation when decisions are made. On the contrary, countries with large power distance will likely have subordinates that are very dependent on their bosses, will follow procedures that are dictated by management, and with a reward systems in place that are not equal.

There is a correlation noted between cultures that are individualistic which tend to be lower power distance whereas, cultures with strong collectivism will likely have small power distance (Phatak, Bhagat, & Kashlak, 2009). The third cultural dimension in the text is uncertainty avoidance which is described as the extent to which members of society will experience anxiety over uncertainty in their environments and how far they will go to avoid it (Phatak, Bhagat, & Kashlak, 2009).

Cultures that are high in uncertainty avoidance will attempt to control these unstructured situations with strict laws, rules, safety and security measures, and with the use of philosophical and religious beliefs (Itim International, 2012). Uncertainty accepting cultures are more tolerant of opinions that differ from their own and allow many different religious and philosophical ideas to flow concurrently. Masculinity and Femininity is the fourth cultural dimension that compares how societies and cultures are composed based on masculine and feminine tolerance traits.

More feminine societies have expectations for both males and females to act in similar manners. Members are supposed to be modest, compassionate, and are expected to stress solidarity through compromise and negotiation. The masculine societies and cultures are driven by material success, money. They expect men to be assertive, ambitious, and tough. The women of masculine societies are to be tender and hold care taker roles. The masculine society stresses competition, performance and conflicts are resolved through fights (Phatak, Bhagat, & Kashlak, 2009).

The fifth and final cultural dimension is time orientation and it is stated that different societies place a varying emphasis on the value of time. Some cultures value time and are very conscious of how time is spent. Other societies consider time to be unlimited and a resource that they cannot exhaust. This makes the way that multiple countries address punctuality and their sense of urgency very different. Cultures with no time orientation will come across to many other cultures as very casual. The other aspect of time orientation is based on the different cultural views about the future.

Cultures with short-term orientations are concerned with things like leisure time, bottom lines, and have a tendency to use short term investment plans. Their management teams are rewarded for immediate financial outcomes. In contrast the cultures with long-term future orientations have philosophies in which persistence is valued, gratification is delayed, and investments are longer term. In these cultures family and work are not separated and status is respected (Phatak, Bhagat, & Kashlak, 2009).

Hofstede's model of dimensions has been applied in practice to many domains internationally to include public, business, education, and healthcare and have become widely used (Itim International, 2012). Meaning and Impact of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions John Bing's article discusses the impact of Hofstede's work on consulting and business practices across the globe and states that Hofstede's findings could be applied to business in general (Bing, 2004). The way that Hofstede organized his dimensions into mental geographies explained how there could be similarities and differences between countries in close physical proximity. He states that Hofstede's survey research which was employed across a large number of countries created a whole new field of comparative intercultural research. The Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire Hofstede created has been used to help individuals understand the cultural preferences of their peers and their own preferences. It is believed that many professionals have benefited from studying Hofstede's work and being able to apply its principles to their own work.

The author used Hofstede's principals in his own work during the development of a prototype for the first Peace Corps cross-cultural manual

(Bing, 2004). Hofstede's work has been the standard to which many others make reference and his past works have characterized much of the contemporary cross-cultural quantitative research models. There have been many offshoots from his research even from those individuals who do not necessarily agree with his theory or conclusions. If nothing else they at least acknowledge his work.

His work was almost immediately used in attempts to determine how people could be helped to work more effectively in more than one culture. Hofstede's work is sometimes misunderstood or misused when practitioners attempt to predict individual preferences based on the scores of the entire cultures. Bing says that Hofstede likes to make it clear that country scores will not predict an individual's cultural preferences but will predict the group tendencies (Bing, 2004). Hofstede's cultural dimensions have influenced how people organize and understand the varying cultural dimensions of the regions they travel to for personal and business reasons.

Once Hofstede's dimensions have been studied and understood the subtle nuances of different cultures will become more apparent to the informed observer. Such was the experience of Bing per his article as he traveled to Austria and Japan (Bing, 2004). He also discusses the potential benefit of applying a study of the cultural dimensions to gain a better understanding of why countries resort to war when negotiations and other legal, moral, and conflict management alternatives may be better alternatives.

He notes that sophisticated interpreters of Hofstede's research have found ways to avoid the application of stereotypes about cultures that have long since changed. The value of Hofstede's research is found when the

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dimensions are used to help individual learners to understand their own cultural dimensions first. This then opens the door to a better understanding about the different preferences that others in the organization or workplace will have. (Bing, 2004).

The study of Hofstede's cultural dimensions has opened a door of better understanding for me as Bing referenced. It is easy to grow up learning the known stereotypes of other cultures due to misunderstandings of how those cultures have changed or adapted over time. By gaining a better understanding about how entire cultures have come to their common values, their cultural practices, and even their religious beliefs and how these impact business decisions and emotions that people exhibit will enhance my overall effectiveness in business.

To have an actual framework such as Hofstede's cultural dimensions as tools for analysis to use when trying to understand the objections and barriers that come up while transacting business will make me a more effective employee. I believe that Hofstede's research has already changed business practices for many international workplaces with regard to how they prepare and support their employees who are deployed all across the globe.

Most companies have cultural diversity training upon hire or annually to reinforce the need for cooperation and sensitivity to diverse cultures in the workplace. I must admit that being an American woman, raised by a single mother of seven, I rate high in individualism and prefer masculinity to femininity. I prefer to work in organizations with low power distance and like the ability to collaborate but not to work where there is a total lack of

individual decision making capabilities. I do think short-term and have a results oriented, time is money mentality.

My uncertainty avoidance level is very low and I move quickly to learn and try new things. As I have read the text and studied the findings of Hofstede I came to the realization that I had preconceived ideas about other women who to me appear to lack self empowerment. I will have to practice applying a study of Hofstede's cultural dimensions to my assumptions in the future to ensure that going forward I reach out with a perspective of better understanding as to why these individuals may be in that less empowered state.

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