

# Hofstede's model essay



Geert Hofstede developed a cultural dimension model that explains the five categories of positions between national cultures. The five dimensions pertaining to this model include: individualism, materialism, time orientation, deference to authority and uncertainty avoidance. Hofstede's research is still practiced today but has undergone some changes since it was first introduced due to cultural and economic modifications during past years. To understand this model the five dimensions need to be discussed and explained.

Individualism refers to which people feel they are supposed to take care of or to be cared for either by families or organizations they belong to. Materialism is a culture pertaining to dominance, and acquisition of things versus a culture which is conducive to people and their feelings and the quality of life. Time orientation involves short term goals that emphasize value orientation towards the present and long term goals, which look into the future, like saving and persistence. Deference of authority is the ability of the manager to be seen as superior and favored.

If they are challenged then they are able to handle the situation in a manner that reflects this principle. Lastly, the uncertainty avoidance discusses how people in a country prefer structured or unstructured situations. The United States falls very high on the individualist scale. This is due to many people relying on their own self-interests. The best way to boost productivity in the United States is to offer rewards and bonuses that tie into employee's individual performances. In the U. S. people live for the present, which correlates to receiving those bonus and rewards immediately rather than waiting for them in the future.

When employees have a problem with their supervisors they usually confront them and try to discuss the process to figure out a logical way to go about the problem. The U. S. also has a low uncertainty avoidance, which is characterized by taking more risks and becoming more innovative with ideas and concepts. During class the U. S. group showed similar results of how the country fits into these specific categories. Southwest Airlines has a culture that does not fit into the U. S. culture, which is opposite of JetBlue Airways whose culture has a closer relationship to the U. S. Southwest is a culture that stays together as a family.

Employees would look after one another just in case they needed each other's help in the future. An example of this is how an employee helped out a Southwest passenger by taking care of his dog while he went on vacation. However, JetBlue is similar to Southwest because they also care about the group as a whole. JetBlue made different types of job options for their employees who have families or student in college. They made sure their employees had the right schedule they needed which would allow them to not worry about anything while at work.

This boosted their performance and concentration. The main objective for Southwest is relationships they keep between people and other organizations. They value the relationship because keeping those healthy will increase revenue and keep the company strong. Employees also come to work and have great amounts of energy because they enjoy what they do. JetBlue is more on the other side being concerned with money. Employees are concerned about the salary they make and how much bonus or rewards they will receive being in the company.

Southwest's' orientation is more of a long term because they always look to the future, while JetBlue is short. Having change is beneficial and is what Southwest looks upon. While JetBlue tries to keep everything in order so nothing gets out of place and simple routines stay steady throughout. These organizational cultures that each airline has adopted help it to become the best it can and work correlating to their own success. However, if these cultures were introduced in China they would not facilitate properly due to differences in their culture.

China's culture would accept the values and goals of Southwest because it correlates to them very closely. China is high on collectivism, in between with materialism, high on long-term orientation, high on deference to authority, and comfortable with uncertainty. Chinese culture would appreciate how Southwest as a company go about handling their business. The main aspect of Chinese culture is how people are concerned with others and how they form groups in every aspect of life. Another major aspect is how Chinese cultures do not argue with their superiors or question their ideas.

This is prominent in the Intel in China case reading that showed how an employee did not obey his boss and what kind of situation this caused in the company. If the Chinese adopted JetBlue there would be conflicts since their national culture does not have the same views. Hofstede's model is widely used to discuss many types of cultures whether they are companies or countries. They give a basic understanding of how each culture relates to the five dimensions of the model. This model is also imperative for companies to

understand since it breaks down the way managers should see things as well as views of the company as a whole.