

# Culture shock essay

Business



International moving adds even more pressure than a national or regional move. Anyone who has lived or studied or even traveled extensively in another country, has tasted and lived through culture shock.

At the time it may feel more like homesickness, but what most people who haven't undergone any kind of pre-adaptation program don't know is that there are several stages one goes through when adjusting to a new language and culture. Before we undertake these five steps, let's look at what is culture shock and what causes it. By knowing what it is and where it comes from, will help you identify it more easily and help make your international move a little easier. The online Oxford Dictionary defines culture shock as disorientation experienced when suddenly subjected to an unfamiliar culture or way of life. This is a good summary; however, let's break it down a bit further.

When you move to a new country, everything is unfamiliar; weather, landscape, language, food, dress, social roles, values, customs and communication – basically, everything you're used to is no longer. You'll find that the day unfolds differently, that business is conducted in a way that may be hard to understand, the stores are opened and closed at hours that you could never predict. Your patterns are off-kilter, the smells, sounds and tastes are unusual and you can't communicate with the locals – not even to buy a loaf of bread.

This is culture shock. And like any form of shock, there is a definite and almost certain reaction.