

Interaction: preparation



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Summarize the steps... Thanks to technology and more awareness about cultural diversity, it is now easier for people of different cultures to communicate with each other efficiently. I will give a deep consideration to what needs to be done before meeting my cultural partner and after. I will prepare notes that will help me convey my thoughts and preferences to my partner without having him go through the difficulty of comprehending my values and norms. I will study about his cultural values in detail and will make a comprehensive research about his cultural perspectives and any cultural taboos. This will help me in better understanding the cultural differences between my partner and me. 2) Describe key learnings... I studied Hofstede's five cultural dimensions (Lee-Ross & Lashley, 2008) and have concluded that I will be providing a low power/distance (low PD) environment to my cultural communication partner so that he may feel at ease while communicating with me and so that I may be able to involve more and more people in decision making while ensuring team work. I would prefer low individualism (low IDV) with the partner so that we may come to respect each other and work in cohesion. I will also ensure a low masculinity factor (low MAS) so that I can work with equal and shared terms if my cultural partner is a female. I would prefer a high uncertainty/avoidance (UAI) index because I want to avoid uncertain events occurring due to cultural differences. I would also ensure a high long term orientation (LTO) because I want to abide by long term social obligations. 3) Identify the potential challenges... Potential challenges that I may encounter with my communication partner are the cultural differences which may be a hurdle between us in understanding each other's beliefs, thoughts, norms and values. Although I will try to deeply study my partner's culture, still I feel that

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it will be a great challenge to cope with the differences in thoughts and also in language. Developing a healthy interpersonal relationship with no communication gap is hard to achieve when the other partner is from a different culture (Lustig and Koester, 2009). In GLOBE cultural taxonomy, I would be high in in-group collectivism, low in institutional collectivism, high in gender egalitarianism, moderate in assertiveness and performance orientation, and high in future and humane orientations.

4) Predict... After studying the cultural taxonomies, I predict that my cultural partner will exhibit a high PD and a high IDV before we have interacted with each other but it will be my duty to make him at ease by ensuring him that power is equally distributed between the two of us and there is no individualism because a team work with equal respect and share in decision making is required. Rest I predict that he will also show low MAS, high UAI, and high LTO.

5) Conclude... To conclude, I will take a comprehensive study of my partner's culture and will understand issues, taboos and customs of his culture so that he may come to know that I respect his beliefs and want to fill the gap produced by cultural differences. This will help develop trust and confidence between the two of us which will nurture a helping collaborative relationship. I will also ensure that he feels distributed power, a share in decision making, and enjoys a healthy relationship.

References Lee-Ross, D., & Lashley, C. (2008). *Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management in the Hospitality Industry*. USA: Butterworth-Heinemann. Lustig, MW., & Koester, J. (2009). *Intercultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication Across Cultures*. USA: Allyn & Bacon.