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Culture-Based Negotiation Styles

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In an anonymous article, a Japanese writer describes United States negotiators as hard to understand. One of the reasons for this, we are told, is because "unlike Japanese, the Americans are not racially or culturally homogenous." [1] While it is difficult to characterize any national or cultural approach to negotiation, generalizations are frequently drawn. These generalizations are helpful to the extent that the reader remembers that they are only guides, not recipes. Any generalization holds true or not depending on many contextual factors including time, setting, situation, stakes, history between the parties, nature of the issue, individual preferences, interpersonal dynamics and mood.

Any generalization will apply to some members of a group some of the time. This is best seen by considering generalizations about groups to which you belong. If you hear that women or men tend to negotiate in this way, or Americans in another way, what effect does it have on you as a member of these groups? If you want to answer, "Actually, it depends," you are among the majority, for most of us resist easy categorization and broad classifications. At the same time, it can be useful to back up and attempt to see ourselves and others from a distance so that the patterns and habits that define what is "normal" in negotiation can be examined for what they are: culturally bound and culturally defined common sense.

In this essay, some generalizations about cultural and national approaches to negotiation will be outlined. These may help negotiators and mediators prepare for negotiations by raising the kinds of differences that occur across cultures, and pointing out possible pitfalls of lack of attention to cultural factors. They should be taken as a series of starting points rather than definitive descriptions, since cultural groups are too diverse and changing contexts too influential to be described reliably.

Before outlining these generalizations, a caveat: most of the ways of studying culture, communication, and negotiation are derived largely from Western concepts. When a U.S. or Western European instrument to measure assertiveness in negotiation is translated into Japanese, for example, it retains Western assumptions about the nature of assertiveness. A Japanese idea of assertiveness that included avoidance as an adaptive and appropriate strategy could be easily missed, labeled as unassertive because of cultural assumptions about the natures of assertion and avoidance. Because of the lack of good studies that take an intercultural approach (using a variety of starting points and currencies in developing the research itself and a multicultural team to carry it out), the generalizations that follow are limited. More research is being done on culture-specific approaches by insiders of various non-Western cultures, and some intercultural research is also being conducted -- these should be carefully examined as they become available. [2]

Additional insights into culture based negotiation styles are offered by Beyond Intractability project participants.

Cultural Approaches to Negotiation

In this section, various ways of analyzing cultural differences will be discussed as they relate to negotiation. The analytical tools come from the work of several well-known intercultural experts, including Hofstede, Hall, Kluckhohn, Strodbeck, and Carbaugh.[3] It must be emphasized that there is no one right approach to negotiations. There are only effective and less effective approaches, and these vary according to many contextual factors (See Culture and Conflict Resolution, Cultural and Worldview Frames, Cross-Cultural Communication, and/or Communication Tools for Understanding Cultural Differences). As negotiators understand that their counterparts may be seeing things very differently, they will be less likely to make negative judgments and more likely to make progress in negotiations.

Time Orientations

Two different orientations to time exist across the world: monochronic and polychronic. Monochronic approaches to time are linear, sequential and involve focusing on one thing at a time. These approaches are most common in the European-influenced cultures of the United States, Germany, Switzerland, and Scandinavia. Japanese people also tend toward this end of the time continuum. Polychronic orientations to time involve simultaneous occurrences of many things and the involvement of many people. The time it takes to complete an interaction is elastic, and more important than any schedule. This orientation is most common in Mediterranean and Latin cultures including France, Italy, Greece, and Mexico, as well as some Eastern and African cultures.

Negotiators from polychronic cultures tend to

- start and end meetings at flexible times,
- take breaks when it seems appropriate,
- be comfortable with a high flow of information,
- expect to read each others' thoughts and minds,
- sometimes overlap talk,
- view start times as flexible and not take lateness personally.

Negotiators from monochronic cultures tend to

- prefer prompt beginnings and endings,
- schedule breaks,
- deal with one agenda item at a time,
- rely on specific, detailed, and explicit communication,
- prefer to talk in sequence,
- view lateness as devaluing or evidence of lack of respect.

Another dimension of time relevant to negotiations is the focus on past, present, or future. Cultures like Iran, India, and the Far East are categorized by Carbaugh as past-oriented. The United States, he indicates, tends to be oriented to the present and the near-future. Latin America leans toward both present and past orientations. As detailed in other essays, indigenous people in North America combine a past- and future-oriented approach to time that stretches seven generations forward and back. Negotiators focused on the present should be mindful that others may see the past or the distant future as part of the present. Negotiators for whom time stretches into the past or the future may need to remember that a present orientation can bring about needed change.

Space Orientations

Space orientations differ across cultures. They have to do with territory, divisions between private and public, comfortable personal distance, comfort or lack of comfort with physical touch and contact, and expectations about where and how contact will take place. In Northern European countries, personal space is much larger than in Southern European countries. For a German or a Swedish person, for example, the Italians or the Greeks get too close. An American etiquette manual advises this about personal space: "When you meet someone, don't stand too close. (Remember the angry expression, "Stay out of my face!") An uncomfortable closeness is very annoying to the other person, so keep your physical distance, or he'll have to keep backing off from you. A minimum of two feet away from the other person will do it." [4]

Certain cultures, including Mediterranean, Arab, and Latin American, are more tactile and allow more touching. Asian, indigenous American, Canadian, and U.S. cultures tend to discourage touching outside of intimate situations. Certain cultures allow cross-gender touching, including the United States, while same-gender touching is less acceptable. These rules change in Japan, where women are frequently seen holding hands, but not men. In the Mediterranean, it is common to see men holding hands or touching in public, but not women. Greeting rituals fit with these patterns, so awareness of local norms is important for negotiators.

Space also relates to comfort with eye contact and attributions related to eye contact or lack of eye contact. In United States and Canadian dominant culture settings as well as many Arab cultures, eye contact is taken as a sign of reliability and trustworthiness. In North American indigenous settings, eye contact may be seen as disrespectful and inappropriate. Similarly, in Asian settings, looking down is usually interpreted as a sign of respect. Beyond these generalizations is a great deal of complexity. Lederach observes, for example, that in Central America, a slight movement of the eyes may indicate embarrassment, showing respect, or disagreement." [5]

Seating arrangements for negotiations should take norms for space into account. In general, Americans tend to talk with people seated opposite them, or at an angle. For the Chinese, these arrangements may lead them to feel alienated and uneasy. They may prefer to converse while sitting side by side.

There are large differences in spatial preferences according to gender, age, generation, socioeconomic class, and context. These differences vary by group, but should be considered in any exploration of space as a variable in negotiations.

Nonverbal Communication

Closely related to notions of space is nonverbal communication. In intercultural studies, Japanese negotiators have been observed to use the most silence, Americans a moderate amount, and Brazilians almost none at all. [6] Touching may convey closeness in some contexts and create offense in others. For example, in Mexico, a hug may reliably communicate the development of a trusting relationship, while a German negotiator might experience a hug as inappropriately intimate. [7] Facial gazing, or looking directly into the face of a negotiating counterpart, is more common in Brazil than the United States, and even more infrequent in Japan.

Power Distance

Geert Hofstede is an organizational anthropologist from the Netherlands who did his research within large, multinational corporations. It should be applied to negotiations outside commercial settings with care, but it is useful to look at it because of the dimensions of difference he identified across national cultures. Hofstede uses the idea of power distance to describe the degree of

deference and acceptance of unequal power between people. Cultures where there is a comfort with high power distance are those where some people are considered superior to others because of their social status, gender, race, age, education, birth, personal achievements, family background or other factors. Cultures with low power distance tend to assume equality among people, and focus more on earned status than ascribed status. Generally, the more unequally wealth is distributed, the higher will be the power distance in any national setting. According to Hofstede, national cultures with a high power distance include Arab countries, Guatemala, Malaysia, the Philippines, Mexico, Indonesia, and India. Negotiators from these countries tend to be comfortable with

- hierarchical structures,
- clear authority figures, and
- the right to use power with discretion.

Countries with a low power distance include Austria, Denmark, Israel, New Zealand, Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Switzerland, Britain, and Germany. Negotiators from these countries tend to be comfortable with

- democratic structures and flat organizational hierarchies,
- shared authority,
- the right to use power only in limited circumstances and for legitimate purposes.

Uncertainty Avoidance

Another of Hofstede's categories has to do with the way national cultures relate to uncertainty and ambiguity, and therefore, how well they may adapt to change. Generally, countries that show the most discomfort with ambiguity and uncertainty include Arab, Muslim, and traditional African countries, where high value is placed on conformity and safety, risk avoidance, and reliance on formal rules and rituals. Trust tends to be vested only in close family and friends. It may be difficult for outsider negotiators to establish relationships of confidence and trust with members of these national cultures.

Hofstede identified the United States, Scandinavia, and Singapore as having a higher tolerance for uncertainty. Members of these national cultures tend to value risk-taking, problem-solving, flat organizational structures, and tolerance for ambiguity. It may be easier for outsiders to establish trusting relationships with negotiating partners in these cultural contexts.

Masculinity-Femininity

Hofstede used the terms masculinity and femininity to refer to the degree to which a culture values assertiveness or nurturing and social support. The terms also refer to the degree to which socially prescribed roles operate for men and women. Hofstede rated countries and regions such as Japan and Latin America as preferring values of assertiveness, task-orientation, and achievement. In these cultures, there tend to be more rigid gender roles and "live to work" orientations. In countries and regions rated feminine such as Scandinavia, Thailand, and Portugal, values of cooperation, nurturing, and relationship solidarity with those less fortunate prevail, and the ethic is more one of "work to live." Of course, it is important to remember that associations with gender vary greatly across cultures, so that elements considered masculine in one culture might be considered feminine in another. Negotiators may find it useful to consider the way gender roles play out in the cultural contexts of their negotiating partners.

Cross-Cultural Negotiations

It is difficult to track the myriad starting points used by negotiators from different national settings, especially as cultures are in constant flux, and context influences behavior in multiple ways. Another complication is that much of the cross-cultural negotiation literature comes from the organizational area. While it cannot be applied wholesale to the realm of intractable conflicts, this literature may provide some hints about approaches to negotiation in various national settings. Dr. Nancy Adler compares key indicators of success as reported by negotiators from four national backgrounds.[8] Her table is reproduced here, ranking characteristics of negotiators in order of importance as reported by managers in each national setting:

AMERICAN NEGOTIATORS	JAPANESE NEGOTIATORS	CHINESE (TAIWAN) NEGOTIATORS	BRAZILIAN NEGOTIATORS
Preparation and planning skill	Dedication to job	Persistence and determination	Preparation and planning skill
Thinking under pressure	Perceive and exploit power	Win respect and confidence	Thinking under pressure
Judgment and intelligence	Win respect and confidence	Preparation and planning skill	Judgment and intelligence
Verbal expressiveness	Integrity	Product knowledge	Verbal expressiveness
Product knowledge	Demonstrate listening skill	Interesting	Product knowledge
Perceive and exploit power	Broad perspective	Judgment and intelligence	Perceive and exploit power
Integrity	Verbal expressiveness	Competitiveness	Integrity

As Adler points out, Brazilians and Americans were almost identical in the characteristics they identified, except for the final category. The Japanese tended to emphasize an interpersonal negotiating style, stressing verbal expressiveness, and listening ability, while their American and Brazilian counterparts focused more on verbal ability, planning, and judgment. To the Chinese in Taiwan, it was important that the negotiator be an interesting person who shows persistence and determination.

Negotiators also vary in the styles of persuasion they rely upon and their comfort with emotionality. In American settings, appeals tend to be made to logic, relying on "objective" facts. Emotional sensitivity is not highly valued, and dealings may seem straightforward and impersonal. Japanese negotiators value emotional sensitivity highly, and tend to hide emotions behind calm exteriors. Latin American negotiators tend to share the Japanese appreciation of emotional sensitivity, and express themselves passionately about their points of view. Arab negotiators may appeal to emotions and subjective feelings in an effort to persuade others. Russians, in contrast, tend to appeal to ideals, drawing everyone's attention to overarching principles.[9]

Many other cultural differences have been identified by negotiation scholars. Some of these differences are discussed in the other Beyond Intractability essays regarding culture and conflict

resolution (See Culture and Conflict Resolution, Cultural and Worldview Frames, Cross-Cultural Communication, and/or Communication Tools for Understanding Cultural Differences). This essay concludes with negotiating styles associated with national and regional cultures. As with all cultural patterns, these generalizations do not apply to every circumstance or individual. They are general patterns that will shift as cultures and contexts shift.

U.S. Approaches to Negotiation

U.S. negotiators tend to rely on individualist values, imagining self and other as autonomous, independent, and self-reliant. This does not mean that they don't consult, but the tendency to see self as separate rather than as a member of a web or network means that more independent initiative may be taken. Looking through the eyes of the Japanese negotiator who wrote "Negotiating With Americans", American negotiators tend to:

- be competitive in their approach to negotiations, including coming to the table with a fall-back position but beginning with an unrealistic offer;
- be energetic, confident, and persistent; they enjoy arguing their positions, and see things universally – i.e., they like to talk about broad applications of ideas;
- concentrate on one problem at a time;
- focus on areas of disagreement, not areas of commonality or agreement;
- like closure and certainty rather than open-endedness or fuzziness.

Do these generalizations ring true? Clearly, it depends which Americans you are talking about, which sector they represent, and the context surrounding the negotiations. Is this a family matter or a commercial one? Is it about community issues, national policy, or a large public conflict? Strategies change according to context and many other factors.

African Approaches to Negotiation

Many African nations have indigenous systems of conflict resolution that have endured into the present, sometimes quite intact and sometimes fragmented by rapid social change. These systems rely on particular approaches to negotiation that respect kinship ties and elder roles, and the structures of local society generally. In Nigeria, for example, people are organized in extended families (nnu'), village (idu' or obio), lineage ('duk), and lineage groups (iman).[10] A belief in the continuing ability of ancestors to affect people's lives maintains social control, and makes the need to have formal laws or regulations minimal. Negotiation happens within social networks, following prescribed roles. Women in conflict with husbands, for example, are to defer and apologize, preparing a ritual meal to symbolize the restoration of harmony.

In the Nigerian Ibibio context, the goal of restoring social networks is paramount, and individual differences are expected to be subsumed in the interest of the group. To ensure that progress or an agreement in a negotiation is preserved, parties must promise not to invoke the power of ancestors to bewitch or curse the other in the future. The aim of any process, formal or informal, is to affect a positive outcome without a "residue of bitterness or resentment." [11] Elders have substantial power, and when they intervene in a conflict or a negotiation, their words are respected. This is partly because certain elders are believed to have access to supernatural powers that can remove protective shields at best and cause personal disaster at worst.

In other African contexts, a range of indigenous processes exist in which relationships and hierarchies tend to be emphasized.

Japanese Styles of Negotiation

There is a great deal written about Japanese approaches to negotiation, and collisions between American and Japanese approaches are legendary.[12] The following values tend to influence Japanese communication: focus on group goals, interdependence, and a hierarchical orientation.[13] In negotiations, these values manifest themselves in awareness of group needs and goals, and deference to those of higher status. Japanese negotiators are known for their politeness, their emphasis on establishing relationships, and their indirect use of power.[14] Japanese concern with face and face-saving is one reason that politeness is so important and confrontation is avoided. They tend to use power in muted, indirect ways consistent with their preference for harmony and calm. In comparative studies, Japanese negotiators were found to disclose considerably less about themselves and their goals than French or American counterparts.[15]

Japanese negotiators tend to put less emphasis on the literal meanings of words used in negotiation and more emphasis on the relationships established before negotiating begins.[16] They are also less likely than their U.S. counterparts to make procedural suggestions.[17]

European Styles of Negotiation

European styles of negotiation vary according to region, nationality, language spoken, and many other contextual factors. One study found the French to be very aggressive negotiators, using threats, warnings, and interruptions to achieve their goals. [18] German and British negotiators were rated as moderately aggressive in the same study.

Latin American Styles of Negotiation

Role expectations influence negotiation in Latin American contexts. Responsibility to others is generally considered more important than schedules and task accomplishment. Their negotiation approach relates to the polychronic orientation to time and patterns of high-context communication and communitarianism, described earlier. Lederach reports that a common term for conflict in Central America is *enredo*, meaning "entangled" or "caught in a net." [19] He explains that *enredo* signifies the way conflict is part of an intimate net of relations in Guatemala and elsewhere in Central America. Thus, negotiation is done within networks, relationships are emphasized, and open ruptures are avoided.

In Central America, people think about and respond to conflict holistically. Lederach contrasts his natural (American) inclination to "make a list, to break [a] story down into parts such as issues and concerns" with his Central American experience, where people tended to respond to requests for naming issues to be negotiated with "yet another story." [20] They preferred a storied, holistic approach to conflict and negotiation, rather than a linear, analytical one. When Central Americans needed help with negotiations, they tended to look to insider partials rather than outsider neutrals, preferring the trust and confidence of established relationships and cultural insight to other credentials or expertise. They referred to the concept of *confianza* to explain this preference. *Confianza* means "trustworthiness," that "they know us" and "we know them" and they will "keep our confidences." [21]

The Evolution of Negotiation

Even as different approaches to negotiation across national cultures are identified, change is constant. International business culture tends to privilege Western approaches to negotiation, centered in problem-solving and linear communication, as do many settings. As Western norms are balanced with Eastern and Southern values, and local traditions are balanced with regional and national approaches, negotiation practices continue their global evolution.

- [1] Anonymous. Negotiating with the Americans. Disseminated by James T. Felicita, head of contract systems for NASA Systems Division, Hughes Aircraft Co. March 1983.
- [2] For more explanation of the Western bias of negotiation and conflict resolution research, see Kimmel, Paul. Cultural Perspectives on International Negotiations, *Journal of Social Issues*, 50, (1), 1994, PP. 179-196 and Weldon, Elizabeth and Karen A. Jehn. Examining Cross-Cultural Differences in Conflict Management Behavior: A Strategy for Future Research. *The International Journal of Conflict Management* 1995, 6, (4) October, pp. 387-403.
- [3] Intercultural Communication Presentation, European Career Orientation available at <http://eco.ittralee.ie/personal/presentation.php>; Internet.
- [4] Novinger, Tracy. *Intercultural Communication: A Practical Guide*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2001, p. 121, quoting from Baldrige, Letitia. *Letitia Baldrige's New Complete Guide to Executive Manners*. New York: Macmillan, 1993, p. 121.
- [5] Lederach, John Paul. *Preparing for Peace*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995, p. 43.
- [6] Adler, Nancy. *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior* (3rd Ed.) Cincinnati, OH: South-Western College Publishing, 1997, p. 217.
- [7] *Ibid.*, p. 219.
- [8] *Ibid.*, p. 196. Based on the work of Professor John Graham, University of California at Irvine.
- [9] *Ibid.*, p. 190 and 192, based on the work of Glenn, Witmeyer, and Stevenson and Casse.
- [10] Offiong, Daniel A. Conflict Resolution Among the Ibibio of Nigeria. *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 53, 4, Winter 1997, pp. 423-442.
- [11] *Ibid.*, p. 438.
- [12] Adair et al. Negotiating Behavior When Cultures Collide: The United States and Japan. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Vol 86(3), June 2001.
- [13] Nakanishi, Masayuki and Kenneth M. Johnson. Implications of Self-Disclosure on Conversational Logics, Perceived Communication, Communication Competence, and Social Attraction. A Comparison of Japanese and American Cultures. In Wiseman, Richard L. and Jolene Koester. *Intercultural Communication Competence*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1993, p. 207.
- [14] Graham, Sano, and March. Negotiating Behaviors in Ten Foreign Cultures. *Management Science*. Vol. 40(1), January 1994.
- [15] Nakanishi, Masayuki and Kenneth M. Johnson. Implications of Self-Disclosure on Conversational Logics, Perceived Communication, Communication Competence, and Social Attraction. A Comparison of Japanese and American Cultures. In Wiseman, Richard L. and Jolene Koester. *Intercultural Communication Competence*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1993, p. 207.
- [16] Graham, Sano, and March, p. 77.

[17] Adair et al.

[18] Brett et al. From Adair et al. Negotiating Behavior When Cultures Collide: The United States and Japan. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Vol 86(3), June 2001.

[19] Lederach, p. 77-78.

[20] Ibid., p. 81.

[21] Ibid., p. 89.

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Sources of Additional, In-depth Information on this Topic

Additional Explanations of the Underlying Concepts:

Online (Web) Sources

Conflict Research Consortium. "Culture and Negotiation -- Summary." Conflict Research Consortium, 2000.

Available at: <http://www.beyondintractability.org/booksummary/10149/>.

This is a summary of Guy Oliver Faure and Jeffrey Z. Rubin's "Culture and Negotiation."

Glaser, Tanya. "Communicating With Strangers: An Approach to Intercultural Communication -- Summary." University of Colorado: Conflict Research Consortium, 1900.

Available at: <http://www.beyondintractability.org/articlesummary/10261/>.

This is a summary of William Gudykunst's and Young Yun Kim's article, *Communicating With Strangers: An Approach to Intercultural Communication*. Gudykunst and Kim begin by observing that "we communicate the way we do because we are raised in a particular culture and learn its language, rules, and norms." Different cultures (and subcultures) may have different rules and norms. The authors argue that understanding the other's culture facilitates cross-cultural communication.

"Intercultural Theory." ,

Available at: http://eco.ittralee.ie/personal/theories_III.php.

This site offers a multifaceted discussion of the concept of culture, looking at the notion of cultural differences, and components and characteristics of cultural patterns.

Offline (Print) Sources

LeBaron, Michelle. *Bridging Cultural Conflicts: New Approaches for a Changing World*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, April 2003.

This work presents strategies for bridging the gap between culture and conflict. Becoming skillful at this task is increasingly important to people in all realms of society as the world becomes more integrated. The work illustrates many of the proposed principles through stories.

Kimmel, Paul R. "Cultural Perspectives on International Negotiation." *Journal of Social Issues* 50:1, 1994.

This article discusses the issues of Western bias in negotiation and conflict resolution research.

Weldon, Elizabeth and Karen A. Jehn. "Examining Cross-Cultural Differences in Conflict Management Behavior: A Strategy for Future Research." *The International Journal of Conflict Management* 6:4, October 1995.

This article discusses issues surrounding the Western bias in negotiation and conflict resolution research, and suggests ways to deal with this problem in the future.

Novinger, Tracy. *Intercultural Communication: A Practical Guide*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, March 2001.

This essay examines the role culture plays in communication, and discusses how cultural differences impacts communication, both spoken and unspoken.

Lusting, Myron and Jolene Koester. *Intercultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication Across Cultures*, 4th Edition. Allyn & Bacon, July 8, 2002.

This book discusses cultural differences that exist with respect to communication styles. The book focuses on practical considerations for why we should attempt to understand people.

Cohen, Raymond. "Negotiating Across Cultures." In *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*. Edited by Crocker, Chester A., Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, eds. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, September 2001.

This piece explores the influence of cultural factors on international negotiations. Obstacles to effective negotiation include linguistic dissonance, high-context versus low-context communication, and various forms of cultural misunderstanding.

Druckman, Daniel. "Negotiating in the International Context." In *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques*. Edited by Zartman, I. William and J. Lewis Rasmussen, eds. Herndon, VA: USIP Press, 1997.

This chapter examines various perspectives on international negotiation, including; negotiation as puzzle solving, as a bargaining game, as organizational management, and negotiation as diplomatic politics. In addition to considering these perspectives on negotiation, the author explores general patterns that characterize many types of negotiations. This task is pursued through a survey of the literature on negotiating in the international context.

Lederach, John Paul. *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, August 1, 1996.

In this book the author draws on his personal experiences in order to examine the practice of teaching conflict resolution. Lederach seeks to address the problem of universalized techniques that are falsely assumed to work across different cultural contexts. Instead, Lederach explores the purpose of dispute resolution training and its relationship with culture. The aim is to work toward the development of training methods that will prepare mediators to practice in any culture. [Click here for more info.](#)

Moore, Christopher W. and Peter Woodrow. "What Do I Need to Know about Culture: Practitioners Suggest...." In *Handbook for International Peacebuilding: Into the Eye of the Storm*. Edited by Lederach, John Paul and Janice Moomaw Jenner, eds. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002.

This chapter provides practical suggestions for mediators entering into conflicts in a cultural context different than their own. In particular, they provide a checklist of issues to examine, both of the practitioner's own culture and that of the society in which the practitioner will be acting.

Examples Illustrating this Topic:

Online (Web) Sources

Huang, Gary. "Beyond Culture: Communicating with Asian American Children and Families." , 1900

Available at: <http://www.ericdigests.org/1994/culture.htm>.

Cross-cultural communication is a fundamental issue in education for Asians and Pacific Islanders because they have distinct communication norms that are significantly different from those of native born Americans and other immigrants. If not thoughtfully dealt with, problems in communication between education professionals and Asians and Pacific Islanders can evolve into conflicts. This article has information and suggestions that can help prevent these kinds of conflicts.

Sarmiento, John. "Culturally Responsive Alternative Dispute Resolution For Latinos -- Book Review." Mediation Information & Resource Center (MIRC), 1900.

Available at: <http://www.mediate.com/articles/sarmiento.cfm>.

This review discusses Steven Weller and John A. Martin's published report, "Culturally Responsive Alternative Dispute Resolution For Latinos". The report focuses on the need for a mediation model that accounts for the cultural differences encountered in disputes involving Latino families and communities, as well as the necessity of having mediators that are aware of the cultural gaps between what the authors call the 'Anglo American' society in general, and Latino families' cultural characteristics.

Irani, George E. "Islamic Mediation Techniques for Middle East Conflicts." , 1999

Available at: <http://www.mediate.com/articles/mideast.cfm>.

The purpose of this essay is to explore and analyze non-Western modes and rituals of conflict reduction in Arab-Islamic societies. - also published in Middle East Review of International Affairs vol.3 no.2

Offline (Print) Sources

Offiong, Daniel A. "Conflict Resolution Among the Ibibio of Nigeria." Journal of Anthropological Research 53:4, 1997.

Relying on knowledge from active personal involvement in community matters between 1977 and 1993, the author, an Ibibio community leader, describes and analyzes conflict resolution among the Ibibio.

Johnson, Kenneth and Masayuki Nakanishi. "Implications of Self-Disclosure on Conversational Logics, Perceived Communication, Communication Competence, and Social Attraction: A Comparison of Japanese and American Cultures." In Intercultural Communication Competence. Edited by Wiseman, Richard L. and Jolene Koester, eds. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, March 1993.

Adler, Nancy J. International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior, 4th Edition. South-Western College Publishing, June 13, 2001.

"Unlike many other books in the field that simply compare managers working at home in their various cultures, International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior describes the approaches of successful managers in interacting with people from a wide range of cultures, including from Asia, Africa, Eastern and Western Europe, the Middle East, and people from both North and South America." -from Amazon.com

Teaching Materials on this Topic:

Offline (Print) Sources

Orr, Robert C., ed. *Winning the Peace: An American Strategy for Post-Conflict Reconstruction*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 1, 2004.

"Events in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Balkans have proved that failed and defeated states threaten the national security interests of the United States and the stability of entire regions. But success in addressing these threats clearly depends on more than military might; the post-conflict period is equally crucial. Case studies in this book examine the U.S. approach in Kosovo, East Timor, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The book offers policy guidance on how to handle current reconstruction challenges and on building capacity to do a better job when America is inevitably called on to restore failed nations in the future." - from Amazon.com