

US, Ireland and UK Business Culture – Handout

	USA	Ireland	UK
Expectations of Leaders	<p>Charismatic leaders give inspirational speeches and tend to establish the vision</p> <p>Team oriented. Build successful teams by establishing roles and responsibilities</p> <p>Participative and encourage their subordinates to share ideas and feedback</p>	<p>Democratic approach to hierarchy</p> <p>Praise their employees in private when good work is delivered</p> <p>Perspective on deadlines may be perceived as more relaxed</p>	<p>Task oriented, reward good performance</p> <p>Hands-off and distant but open to subordinates, if you have any doubts you can always ask for clarifications</p> <p>Follows process through –does not hurry as needs to assess implications first</p>
Management Styles	<p>Want to be liked and socially accepted</p> <p>Management competence based on willingness to take risks within the rules</p> <p>Tends to share information widely across the organisation</p> <p>Personal loyalty may be for the duration of the project</p>	<p>Give feedback that is genuine and specific to the individual performance</p> <p>Democratic approach and do not see marked differences between managers and their subordinates</p> <p>Informal and anti-hierarchical</p>	<p>Process-driven</p> <p>Planning, but also “trial and error” pragmatism. Get on with it!</p> <p>Work towards group compromises and ultimately consensus</p> <p>Fairness and inclusion guides most decisions</p>
Communication Styles	<p>Tends to be direct and intended to persuade others to their course of action</p> <p>Can be seen as pushy if they persist against resistance</p> <p>Uncomfortable with silence</p> <p>Use humour freely</p> <p>Expect others to speak up and share opinions</p> <p>Discussion, speech and debate skills are taught in school from a young age</p>	<p>Storytelling is often used (anecdotes, metaphors)</p> <p>Indirect in speech, want to avoid conflict and remain polite</p> <p>Warmth and openness appreciated</p> <p>May avoid saying ‘no’ so make sure you understand what has or has not been agreed</p>	<p>Polite, can be vague to those who do not understand English coded language</p> <p>Tend not to confront difficult issues directly</p> <p>Understatement and self-deprecation common</p> <p>Aims to keep calm and objective</p> <p>Humour can transmit many different messages</p>
Meeting Styles	<p>Stick to the issue being discussed until actions are agreed</p>	<p>Humour at the start of a meeting is serves as ice breaker</p>	<p>Everyone will say something, regardless of their area of expertise</p>

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	<p>Questioning implies interest not challenge or conflict</p> <p>Expect to bargain towards solutions we can all agree on</p> <p>Tend to overstate ideas for emphasis</p> <p>Meetings are for brainstorming, open discussion and debate</p> <p>Silence may be interpreted as not having an opinion, not being interested, not being prepared</p>	<p>Give space for others to speak without interruptions</p> <p>Relaxed and friendly atmosphere in meetings and presentations</p> <p>Everyone on the team who has an opinion is expected to contribute</p>	<p>A free and open debate will come before a decision</p> <p>Humour may be used to defuse tension or illustrate points</p> <p>Pragmatic and realistic solutions are valued</p> <p>Dislike of 'rocking the boat' by expressing opinions too strongly</p> <p>Consensus and compromise solutions valued</p>
Relationship-building Styles	<p>Friendliness for the duration of the deal</p> <p>Difficulties: it's nothing personal</p> <p>Importance of political correctness</p> <p>Meals and sporting events popular. So are opportunities to show 'foreigners' America</p> <p>Small talk is an important social and business skills to build relationships and trust</p> <p>Separation between work time and private time</p>	<p>Learn to laugh about yourself</p> <p>Use of wit, irony, and satire</p> <p>Often comfortable with socialising with colleagues after work</p> <p>Generally, more going out with colleagues after work compared with many some cultures</p>	<p>Systematic use of humour at all occasions</p> <p>British speakers begin with a light anecdote/ joke</p> <p>Small talk is an important social skill</p> <p>Loyal to a caring boss rather than a company</p>
Negotiations and decision-making	<p>Focus on business and not relationship</p> <p>They hate silence and will not hesitate to interrupt you</p> <p>Time urgency: 'Time is money'</p> <p>Decisions can be made quickly</p>	<p>Building lasting and trusting relationships</p> <p>Negotiating perceived as solving a joint problem</p> <p>Decision making may take time</p> <p>May use defensive tactics when needed, stay calm</p>	<p>Believe in win-win</p> <p>Dislike oversell</p> <p>Look for long term success and not one off</p> <p>Decisions may take time</p>