



## Handout Two - What would you do if?

1. You call a colleague to get some information about a local database. Your colleague seems reluctant to pass on the information. What do you do?
  - a. Make a more formal request for information (and make a mental note to take your colleague to lunch next time you are visiting).
  - b. Call his or her boss for the information.
  - c. Ask your boss to call his or her boss.
  
2. At a first videoconference with contacts you are keen to start talking seriously about a new project. They seem keener on getting to know you. What do you do?
  - a. Spend more time than you normally might on chit-chat and make it explicit why you are anxious to start serious discussion.
  - b. Go along with it. Initial meetings in that country are often opportunities for evaluating colleagues and establishing relationships
  - c. Insist on starting serious discussion right away.
  
3. Your contact interrupts you when you are arguing your point during a conference call. What do you do?
  - a. Interrupting is a sign of disrespect, and that's just what you tell your colleague
  - b. Interrupting is a sign of disrespect, but you better keep your mouth shut.
  - c. In many places interrupting is a sign of polite engagement and interest. Accept the interruption and remain focused.
  
4. Your presentation style usually involves making a few jokes at the beginning of a videoconference to engage people. You have heard this might not be appropriate with some international colleagues. What do you do?
  - a. Keep one or two in if it makes you feel comfortable but keep a close eye out for potentially negative reactions.
  - b. Keep them all in. They reflect your personal style
  - c. Take them all out. Better safe than sorry.
  
5. You are on a conference call with counterparts from a variety of cultures. You notice that some of you counterparts are unwilling to challenge or question anything you say.
  - a. Put up with it but explain clearly it is OK for colleagues to challenge you if they disagree with you.
  - b. Put your colleagues on the spot by asking direct questions about their opinions.
  - c. Something else (if so, what?).

6. On a conference call some international colleagues respond to each of your comments with a lengthy period of silence. What do you do?
  - a. Wait for a response and remember to build in pauses in your speech.
  - b. They obviously did not understand your accent, so repeat what you said in different words.
  - c. Assume they have nothing to add and continue to the next point.
  
7. You are in a virtual meeting with a group of global colleagues. They seem a little hesitant in making their personal feelings known in a group meeting. What do you do?
  - a. Put them on the spot by asking each of them directly in the meeting.
  - b. Take time later to ask them what they feel one by one.
  - c. Assume they have nothing to say.
  
8. You finally get to meet some of your virtual colleagues face-to-face when they visit your offices. They stand so close to you that you find it uncomfortable, yet whenever you try to put more distance between you, they move to get close again. What do you do?
  - a. Tell them to back off.
  - b. Relax and just go with the flow. If you really can't stand it try to sit behind a desk
  - c. Keep moving away until he or she gets the message.
  
9. On a visit overseas your local counterparts give you a small gift to thank you for your help. What do you do?
  - a. Open the gift in front of them
  - b. Open the gift later
  - c. Ask 'Would you like me to open it now?'

## Handout Three – Hint and tips for business communication

The UK and Ireland	Nordics, Netherlands	Germanic	France	Mediterranean	Eastern European
Mostly egalitarian	Egalitarian	Hierarchical	Hierarchical	Hierarchical	Mostly hierarchical
UK: indirect, coded ROI: more direct	Bluntly direct	Very direct	Often direct	Indirect, relationship	Mostly direct
Time reasonably important	Time important	Time especially important	Time used to denote status	Time not always important	Time not always important
Pragmatic in planning	Planning, all voices to consensus	Planning to precise detail	Planning but sometimes theory > pragmatism	Relationships > planning	Mix
Work/life balance	Work/life balance	Work/life balance	Work/life balance	Work/life balance	Longer work hours
Cautious	Somewhat cautious	Cautious	Risk takers	Can take risks	Can be opportunistic
Rules	Rules	<i>Ordnung</i>	Rules can be bent	Rules can be bent	Mix
Fair play	Fair play	Quality	Intellectual prowess	Who you know	Mix
Compromise	Alignment	Accuracy, precision	Win	Accommodating	What's best now

General Asia Pacific	Japan	China	Singapore	India	Middle East General
Hierarchical other than OZ, NZ	Very hierarchical	Very hierarchical – mainland, HKG, TWN a bit less so	Somewhat hierarchical	Hierarchical	Hierarchical but influenced by expatriates
Indirect, maintain harmony	Very indirect	Very indirect in a hierarchy, can be blunt with outsiders	Reasonably direct	Directness depends on position within hierarchy	Can switch indirect to direct relationship dependent
Time reasonably important in the North, less in SE Asia	Time important but not rushed	Time especially important but can be impacted by hierarchy	Time generally important	Time not always important	Time generally less important, often reprioritised
Planning generally important but can use different factors	Meticulous planning, all parties in alignment	Central planning – mainland, more input HKG, TWN	Planning with aim for rapid implementation	Relationships > planning	Relationships > planning but can be influenced by expats
Work > life balance	Very long and late work hours	Early and long work hours	Long work hours depend on globalisation	Late start, long work hours	Short work hours for govt sector and many lines of business
Generally cautious, can be fatalistic	Very cautious	Cautiously follow directions	Can be risk takers	Cautious of hierarchy, can be very fatalistic	Can be spontaneous, risk takers, can be very fatalistic
Rules	Rules	Rules from above	Rules	Rules can be bent	Rules for some but not others
Face	Face	Face	Face	Face	Reputation, honour
Harmony	Alignment	Loyalty to China, competitive HKG, TWN	Win	Accommodating but quiet competition	What's best now

The USA	Canada	Spanish Speaking Americas	Brazil	Mexico
Appears egalitarian	Egalitarian	Hierarchical	Hierarchical	Hierarchical
Direct	Bluntly direct	Very direct	Often direct	Indirect, relationship
Time is money	Time important	Time particularly important	Time used to denote status	Time not always important
Planning but can change in stream	Planning, all voices to consensus	Planning to precise detail	Planning but sometimes theory > pragmatism	Relationships > planning
Work > life balance, 'presenteeism'	Work/life balance	Work/life balance mix	Work/life balance	Longer work hours
Cautious, eye on litigation	Pragmatically cautious	Generally cautious	Risk takers	Cautious
Rules	Rules	Rules can be bent	Rules can be bent	Rules can be bent
Appearance of fair play	Fair play	Who you know	Who you know	Who you know
Competitive, win	Collaboration	Relationships, influence	Relationships, influence	Relationships, influence

North Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	South Africa	Nigeria	Kenya
More formally hierarchical	Mostly hierarchical	Hierarchical with some exceptions amongst European backgrounds	Hierarchical – tribal, linguistic, religious	Hierarchical – tribal, linguistic, impact of Indians and Europeans
Reasonably direct, formal	Can be direct	Bluntly direct	Often direct	Somewhat direct
Time not always important	Time generally less important than relationships	Time can be important to some groups, 'now now'	Time used to denote status, not always important	Time not always important
Planning often models French methods	Long term planning difficult for most	Planning but flexibility if facing challenges	Relationships > planning	Relationships > planning
Work/life balance	Work/life balance	Work/life balance	Work/life balance	Work/life balance
Cautious	Somewhat cautious	Will take some risks	Risk takers	Can take risks
Rules can be bent	Rules < who you are	Rules still depend on who you are	Rules can be bent	Rules can be bent
Who you know	Who you know	Who you are	Who you know, connections to the West	Who you are, tribe and ethnicity matter
Relationships, influence	What's best for my group	What's best for my group	What's best for my group	What's best for my group