The Task

Form into groups of three or four with at least one person who is from another country or who has had significant interaction with another culture (he/she may have lived in another country or has close relatives from another culture). This person will be the group’s “informant.” Other group members should ask the informant the questions below. We will ask one person (not the informant) from the group to report back what you have learned from this exercise about another culture.

The Questions

1. How important is the individual in the culture? How important is the group?
2. How important is hierarchy?
3. How is space used?
4. How is time understood and measured? (e.g., how late can you be to a business appointment before you are considered rude?)
5. How are gender roles perceived?
6. Is change considered positive or negative?
7. What are the criteria for individual success?
8. What are the criteria for organizational success?
9. What are the cultural attitudes about technology?
10. What is the relationship between humans and nature? (e.g., do humans dominate nature? does nature dominate humans? do the two live in harmony?)
11. How is divine power viewed in relation to human effort?
12. Is the culture a high-context or low-context one?
13. How do people view obligations toward one another?
14. What personal activities are viewed as public? What activities are viewed as private?
15. What are the cultural attitudes toward aging and the elderly?

16. What is the nature of the authority?

17. What is humorous?

18. How do individual “know” things? (e.g., are people encouraged to question things? are they encouraged to master accepted wisdom?)

19. Are people encouraged to be more action-oriented or to be more contemplative?

20. In business, is a higher priority assigned to results or to relationships?

21. How is uncertainty viewed?

22. Does knowledge have its limits?

23. What is the role of luck in people’s lives?