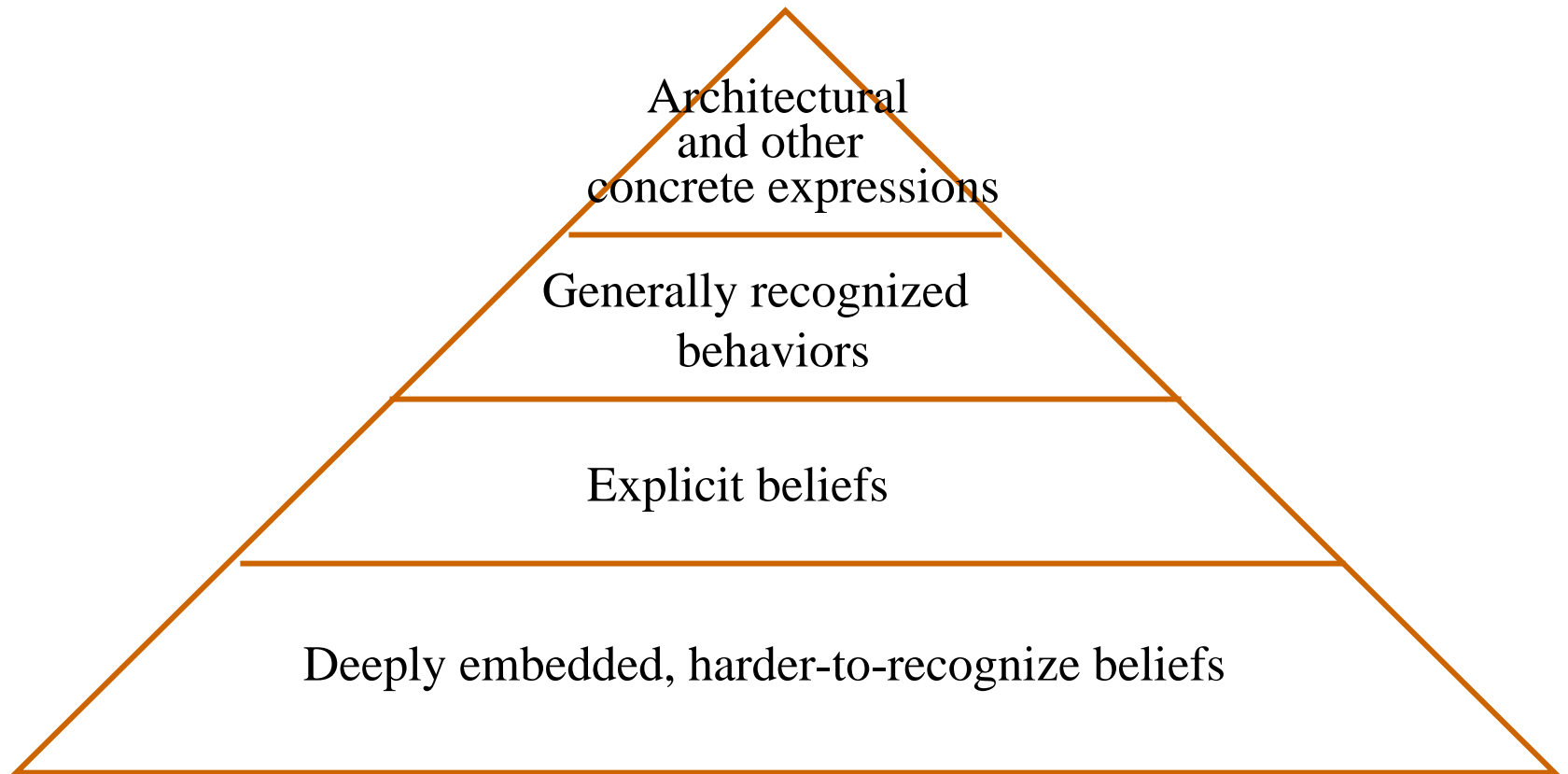

Effective Intercultural Communication Means

- Being able to recognize cultural variables
- Understanding how those variables influence business
- Being able to maximize intercultural communication strengths and minimize potential difficulties
- Increasing cultural sensitivity

A Hierarchy of Cultural Components



Examples of Cultural Components

- Architectural and other concrete elements
 - Buildings, dress
- Recognized behaviors
 - Rituals, taboos
- Explicit beliefs
 - Religion, marriage, social duties
- Deeply embedded beliefs

Ways in Which Cultures Vary

- Individualism versus collectivism
- High context versus low context
- Perception of time
- Perception of space
- Importance of hierarchy
- Nature of change
- Importance and rigidity of gender roles
- Nature of authority
- Humans' relationship to the natural world

The Complexity of Culture

Culture refers to many elements that are implicit and therefore not evident. People tend to think their cultural patterns are natural and correct, and that alternative ways are odd if not wrong. People usually do not reflect on cultural contrasts until they become sensitized to intercultural diversity.

Communication for Managers

From a presentation by Oscar Schiappa-Pietra,
Kennedy School of Government, August 2001

How Cultural Differences Can Impact Professional Interactions

- Either completing a task or building a relationship takes precedence
- Either the written word or the spoken word is more trusted
- Persuasion is based on facts or on the reputation of the individual
- Meetings are for exploring an issue or for demonstrating agreement
- The degree to which hierarchy is important varies

How Cultural Differences Can Impact Teams

Team members may differ in:

- their perception of the team’s objectives
- the way they communicate
- how they view leadership
- work habits
- their manner of interacting with members of the opposite sex
- their level of formality with other team members
- their willingness to socialize with other team members

General Guidelines for Working Interculturally

- Don't assume different is wrong, odd, or counterproductive
- Listen and observe
- Be curious: Read about other team members' cultures or talk to other people from that culture
- Try to discuss differences but be respectful if other team members are not comfortable discussing them
- Provide feedback that is "I" centered, not "you" critical