

ESL Brains

Avoiding culture clashes

3. You are going to discuss the eight-scale framework called 'The Culture Map', which was developed to help people understand how cultural differences impact international business. Match the names of the scales (A–H) with what they represent (1–8).

A. Communicating

B. Evaluating

C. Persuading

D. Leading

E. Deciding

F. Trusting

G. Disagreeing

H. Scheduling

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1. convincing people through theory and concepts | ↔ | convincing people using opinions or facts |
| 2. building relationships through sharing meals and socializing | ↔ | building relationships while doing tasks |
| 3. having an egalitarian organisational structure | ↔ | having a hierarchical organisational structure |
| 4. being strict about time | ↔ | being flexible with time |
| 5. being precise, speaking without hidden meaning | ↔ | speaking with hidden meaning |
| 6. being open to confrontation | ↔ | avoiding confrontation |
| 7. giving direct negative feedback | ↔ | giving indirect negative feedback |
| 8. teams having the final say | ↔ | individuals having the final say |

4. Read the statements about where different cultures are placed on the scales and decide if they are true or false. Then, watch a [video](https://youtu.be/i92yIOSiBkc) [https://youtu.be/i92yIOSiBkc] (to 03:34) and check your answers. Correct false answers.

- A. French people often use a more softened approach to giving feedback, while Americans typically favour a direct style.
- B. The British would first explain the principles and then summarize the main points when trying to persuade.
- C. In Japan or Nigeria, there isn't a clear distinction between superiors and other employees.
- D. In Germany, decisions are made by teams and not only by bosses.
- E. In India, getting to know someone personally is really important to be sure you can rely on them.
- F. In the Netherlands, having arguments and discussions can harm relationships.
- G. When doing business with Italians, there shouldn't be any changes to deadlines.

6. Read the situations that might result from miscommunication in cross-cultural business relationships. Rewrite them using the phrases in brackets.

- A. Being used to having arguments and discussions to seek improvements, I criticised the new proposal in the meeting, only to realise that the Japanese team members interpreted my words as a personal attack. (open confrontation)

- B. During a negotiation meeting in Saudi Arabia, the manager of an American company had to push harder to get further information, feeling uncomfortable with such an indirect way of communication. (explicit communication)

- C. It was mainly because the Malaysian executive expressed his company's preferences through hints and suggestions that the Americans weren't sufficiently convinced, and decided not to close the deal in the end. (subtle tactic)

- D. While trying to avoid being harsh with my feedback, I didn't effectively communicate the necessary improvements to my French colleague, which led to no action being taken. (blunt criticism).
