



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

200
1822 - 2022

Man Geni Addysg Uwch yng Nghymru
Where Higher Education Began in Wales

(2) Trompenaars

7 Dimensions of Culture

Fons Trompenaars

- In 1981, Fons Trompenaars started his career at the Royal Dutch Shell Personnel Division
- Ranked as one of the top 5 management consultants next to Michael Porter



Trompenaars Cultural Dimensions



1. Universalism (1)

Rules Vs Relationships

Social Characteristics of Universalism:

- People place a high importance on laws, rules, values, and obligations
- They try to deal fairly with people based on these guidelines, but rules comes before relationships
- Consistent behaviour
- Society based on values and beliefs
- Objectivity
- Typical countries include: USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia, UK, Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

1. Particularism (2)

Rules Vs Relationships

Social Characteristics of Universalism:

- People believe that their circumstances and relationships dictate the rules that they live by. Their response to a situation may change, based on what's happening in the moment, and who's involved.
- Society based on autonomy
- Flexibility and the heart of relationships
- Relationships are built over the long term.
- Typical Countries include Russia, Latin America, China

2. Individualism Vs Communitarianism

The Individual Vs the Group

Societal/Managerial Characteristics of Individualism:

- Personal freedom
- Personal achievement
- Personal decision-making
- Reward-based society
- Typical countries: USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia, UK, Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands



3. Specific (1)

How Specific People Get Involved

Societal/Managerial Characteristics of Specific:

- Work and private life separate
- Personal relationships are not that important in terms of work
- Discussions are direct
- Focus on yourself before others
- Typical countries: USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia, UK, Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands

3. Diffuse (2)

How Specific People Get Involved

Societal Characteristics of Diffuse:

- Relationships are vital to society and business
- Work relationships are paramount
- Social immersions
- Personal disclose when needed
- Typical countries: Argentina, Russia, Spain, India, China

4. Neutral (1)

How People Express Emotions

Societal/Managerial Characteristics of Neutral:

- Individuals control their emotions
- No personal Revelation
- Dogmatic
- Social observation
- Use of reason rather than intuition
- Typical Countries: UK, USA, Germany

4. Emotional (2)

How People Express Emotions

Societal/Managerial Characteristics of Emotional:

- Cultural acceptance of all emotions
- Public displays of emotion
- Emphasis on building rapport
- Positivity in dialogue and behaviour
- Conflict management
- Typical Countries: Latin America



5. Achievement Vs Ascription (1)

How People View Status

Societal/Managerial Characteristics of Achievement:

- People believe that you are what you do.
- Worth based on what you've achieved
- Cultural value of 'performance'
- Titles have value
- Role Model Behaviour rewarded
- Typical Countries: USA



5. Achievement Vs Ascription (2)

How People View Status

Societal/Managerial Characteristics of Ascription:

- People believe that you should be valued for who you are.
- Genuine power, title and position matter in these cultures
- Power, tile and position dictate behaviour
- Respect is everything
- Typical Countries/Regions: France, Italy, Japan, Middle East

6. Sequential Time Vs Synchronous Time (1)

How People Manage Time

Societal/Managerial Characteristics of Sequential Time:

- People like events to happen in logical order.
- They place a high value on punctuality, planning (and sticking to your plans), and staying on schedule.
- In this type of culture, “time is money,” and people don’t appreciate it when their schedule is thrown off.
- Typical Countries/Regions : USA, UK, Israel, New Zealand



6. Sequential Time Vs Synchronous Time (2)

How People Manage Time

Societal/Managerial Characteristics of Synchronous Time:

- People see the past, present and future as interwoven periods
- Flexibility in professional and personal life
- Punctuality is important.
- Typical Countries/Regions: Japan, South America.

7. Internal Direction Vs Outer Direction (1)

How People Relate to Their Environment

Societal/Managerial Characteristics of Internal Direction:

- People believe that they can control their environment to achieve their goals. This includes how they work with teams and within organisations
- Set clear objectives that people agree with.
- Be open about disagreements and allow people to engage in constructive conflict.



7. Internal Direction Vs Outer Direction (2)

How People Relate to Their Environment

Societal/Managerial Characteristics of Outer Direction:

- Constant Interaction
- Positive reinforcement
- Conflict Management
- Interpersonal encouragement
- Typical Countries/Regions: Russia

Criticisms of Trompenaars

- Hofstede (1996) who claimed that the theory of Trompenaars is not supported by his database.
- The model fails to recognise the influence of personal characteristics on behaviour.
- Just because you are in a group it doesn't mean you are alike!
- The model distinguishes the differences between cultures but does not provide recommendations on how to work with specific cultures.
- Other authors including Ohmae (Borderless World) and Levitt (Globalisation of Markets) argue that national borders are diminishing, and that the world should be seen as a whole and not made up of different countries with different cultures.
- Hofstede's approach appears to be about the analysis of the variables of national culture, whereas Trompenaars is more involved in the process of cultural creation.

The image features a dense, 3D-rendered field of question marks. Most of the question marks are a dark, charcoal grey color and are scattered across the frame, creating a textured background. In the center of the image, a single question mark stands out prominently, rendered in a bright, metallic yellow color. This central yellow question mark is slightly larger and more sharply defined than the others. Overlaid on this scene is the text "Any questions?" in a clean, white, sans-serif font, positioned horizontally across the middle of the image. The lighting appears to come from the upper left, casting soft shadows and highlighting the three-dimensional nature of the question marks.

Any questions?