

Hotel Handbook

Name: Nuri Begum
Module: Cultural Awareness
Module code: BMIH5003
Lecturer: Rodrigo F. Aguilera

Executive Summary

This report addresses the vital role of cultural intelligence and sensitivity in the hospitality industry, with a specific focus on French guests. It explores relevant cross-cultural theories and models such as Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Hall's High-Context and Low-Context Cultures, and the Lewis Model, which are instrumental in understanding and catering to cultural diversity. The report underscores French cultural norms and expectations, providing key implications for various hotel departments in customising their service delivery. The actionable "Do's and Don'ts" listed aim to guide hotel staff interactions with French guests effectively. Key findings affirm that cultural intelligence significantly enhances guest satisfaction and overall hotel performance. Recommendations include implementing comprehensive cultural training programmes for staff and establishing a feedback system to better understand French guests' experiences and expectations, thereby promoting continuous improvement and personalisation in service delivery.

Contents

Introduction	2
Cultural Intelligence in Hospitality	2
The French Visitor.....	3
Do's and Don'ts When Serving French Guests	5
Summary	5
Recommendations	6
References	7

Introduction

The hospitality industry stands at a global crossroads, interacting daily with diverse cultures. The success of a hotel hinges upon its ability to deliver an exceptional guest experience. Central to this is the ability to demonstrate cultural intelligence and sensitivity, which have become increasingly important in the interconnected world. Cultural intelligence, or the ability to understand and interact effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds, goes beyond being a mere asset; it is an integral part of guest satisfaction and a hotel's overall success. In parallel, cultural sensitivity—acknowledging, respecting, and adapting to cultural differences—is essential for tailoring service delivery to guests' unique cultural expectations. To better comprehend these concepts, this report introduces key cross-cultural theories and models, such as Hall's High-Context and Low-Context Cultures, and the Lewis Model. These provide valuable frameworks for understanding cultural diversity and its practical implications, particularly when serving guests from France—a primary focus of the ensuing discussion.

Cultural Intelligence in Hospitality

In the hospitality sector, the ability to deliver personalised, culturally sensitive service is paramount. Cultural intelligence emerges as a linchpin in meeting this demand. It enriches guest interactions, promotes understanding and reduces cultural missteps that could potentially tarnish the guest experience. Hotels employing culturally intelligent staff reap benefits such as increased guest satisfaction, enhanced reputation, and improved financial performance (Zhou, Brown and Dev, 2009). Applying key cross-cultural theories and models can profoundly shape how cultural intelligence is practised. For instance, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions provide insights into how societies differ across aspects like individualism and power distance (Figure 1). Hotel staff can use this knowledge to tailor their approach when dealing with guests from different cultures. Hall's High-Context and Low-Context Cultures, on the other hand, assists in deciphering communication styles, enabling staff to effectively convey messages (Wurtz, 2005). Meanwhile, the Lewis Model guides interactions based on whether guests come from linear-active, multi-active, or reactive cultures (Ramsahai,

2016). Collectively, these theories equip hotel personnel with tools to better interpret and respond to the diverse needs of their international guests.

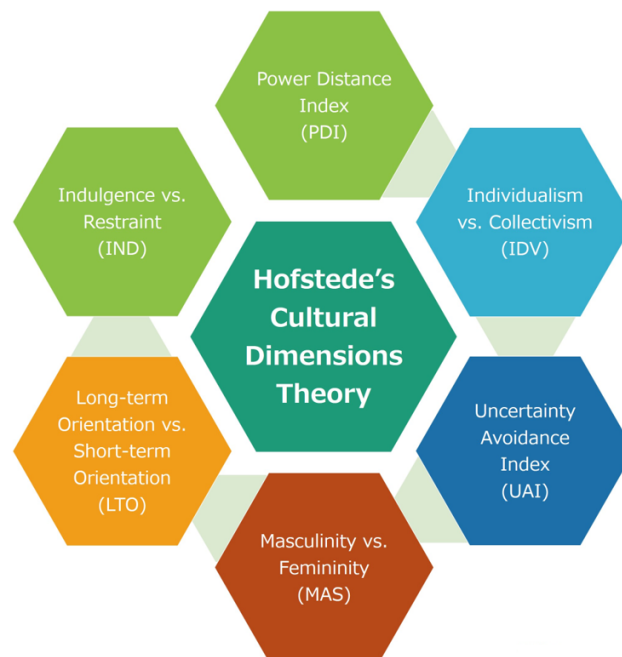


Figure 1 – Infographic of Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, adapted from iEduNote (2019)

The French Visitor

In crafting a hospitable environment for French visitors, it's critical to consider their unique cultural norms and expectations. Known for their rich cultural heritage and meticulous appreciation for etiquette, French guests highly value politeness and respectful service. Respect for privacy and subtlety in communication are other norms integral to the French culture, which can significantly influence their expectation from hotel services. For example, a cordial 'Bonjour' or 'Bonsoir' at the Reception, suited to the time of day, can set the tone for a positive guest experience (Barlow and Nadeau, 2016). Showcasing even a rudimentary grasp of the French language, or merely making an attempt to do so, can significantly reduce cultural barriers. Likewise, Housekeeping should respect the guests' privacy and perform their duties with minimal intrusion. In F&B Services, offering a wide range of quality cheeses, wines, and bread—staples of French cuisine—could heighten the guest dining experience (Figure

2)(Emelita Calica Gonzales, 2020). Furthermore, ensuring that waitstaff understand and accommodate traditional French dining customs, such as extended meal times, can also contribute to a more comfortable and authentic experience for French guests. Lastly, understanding the French preference for formal and subtle communication could guide the Concierge services (Battye, Hintze and Rowlett, 2003). An approach that is helpful, yet respects personal space and privacy, can go a long way in making French guests feel welcome and respected. Through such adaptations in service delivery, hotel staff can demonstrate cultural sensitivity and intelligence, which can significantly enhance the overall experience for their French guests.

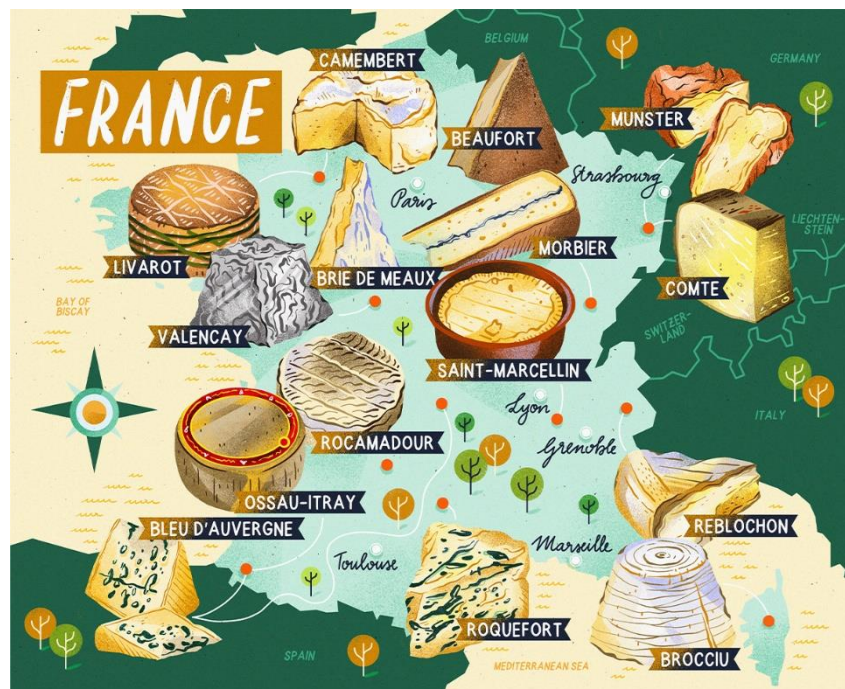


Figure 2 – Geographic infographic of French cuisine, adapted from Neuditschko (2021)

Do's and Don'ts When Serving French Guests

Do's	Don'ts
Use Formal Titles: French culture values formality, especially in initial encounters. Use 'Monsieur' or 'Madame' when addressing guests. (Hassan, 2020)	Rush Service: Unlike some cultures where speed is appreciated, French guests often prefer to take their time, especially during meals.
Learn Basic French Phrases: Even a simple 'Bonjour' (Hello) or 'Merci' (Thank you) can make a guest feel appreciated and respected. (Muehleisen and Migge, 2005)	Forget the Details: French culture appreciates attention to detail, particularly in food and decor. (Johnston and Baumann, 2014)
Respect Privacy: French guests may value their privacy more than guests from other cultures. Ensure staff are attentive but not overly intrusive.	Overdo Friendliness: While being friendly is important, French guests might interpret excessive friendliness as insincerity.
Serve Bread: Bread is a staple in French dining. Offering it during meals would make them feel more at home. (Rubel, 2011)	Overuse Ice: French guests typically prefer drinks without a lot of ice. Consider this when serving beverages. (Ei, 2020)
Offer High-Quality Service: French guests often have high expectations for service.	Interrupt: In French culture, interrupting someone is seen as impolite. Ensure staff wait for guests to finish speaking before responding. (ULIJN, J. and XIANGLING, L. ,1995)

Summary

This report has underscored the vital role of cultural intelligence and sensitivity in the hospitality industry, particularly in serving French guests. We've explored critical cross-cultural theories and models, such as Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Hall's High-Context and Low-Context Cultures, and the Lewis Model, which offer practical tools to decipher diverse cultural norms. Highlighting French cultural norms and expectations,

we've examined their implications across various hotel departments, emphasising the need for adaptations in service delivery. To this end, a set of actionable "Do's and Don'ts" has been presented, aiming to enhance the hotel staff's interactions with French guests. The insights gleaned should equip hotel personnel to deliver a superior, culturally sensitive guest experience, thereby fostering guest satisfaction and overall hotel success.

Recommendations

To optimise our service delivery for French guests, two key recommendations can be put forward. The first pertains to implementing an exhaustive cultural training programme for staff, encompassing key aspects of French culture, etiquette, communication styles, and dining preferences. This initiative is aimed at equipping our team with nuanced understanding and sensitivity towards French norms and expectations, thereby enabling them to deliver a service experience that feels authentic and respectful to our French guests. Our second recommendation proposes the establishment of a comprehensive feedback system, tailored to capture the unique perspectives of our French guests. This interaction offers us a direct window into their experiences, successes, and areas needing enhancement, which in turn can guide our continuous commitment to improving and personalising the guest experience. Through these strategies, the aim is to cultivate a hotel environment that is increasingly attuned to the specific cultural needs of our French guests.

References

Barlow, J. and Nadeau, J.-B. (2016). *The Bonjour Effect: The Secret Codes of French Conversation Revealed*. [online] Google Books. St. Martin's Publishing Group. Available at: https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/The_Bonjour_Effect/AdiLCgAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=greeting+guests+with+a+friendly+%27Bonjour%27+&pg=PR1&printsec=frontcover [Accessed 9 Jun. 2023].

Battye, A., Hintze, M.-A. and Rowlett, P. (2003). *The French Language Today: A Linguistic Introduction*. [online] Google Books. Routledge. Available at: https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/The_French_Language_Today/RnUGCAAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=French+preference+for+formal+and+subtle+communication+could+guide+the+Concierge+services&pg=PP1&printsec=frontcover [Accessed 9 Jun. 2023].

Ei, N.N (2020)., *A Comparative Study of the French and Myanmar Table Manners* (Doctoral dissertation, MERAL Portal).

Emelita Calica Gonzales (2020). *Corporate strategy of hotel Mirage*. [online] Animo Repository. Available at: https://animorepository.dlsu.edu.ph/etd_masteral/1606/ [Accessed 9 Jun. 2023].

Hassan, A. (2020). Changes in uses of salutations in British English. *International Research Journal of Management, IT and Social sciences*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.21744/irjmis.v7n1.840>.

iEduNote (2019). *Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory*. [online] iEduNote.com. Available at: <https://www.iedunote.com/hofstedes-cultural-dimensions-theory>.

Johnston, J. and Baumann, S. (2014). *Foodies: Democracy and Distinction in the Gourmet Foodscape*. [online] Google Books. Routledge. Available at: <https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Foodies/WmO2BQAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=French+culture+appreciates+attention+to+detail> [Accessed 9 Jun. 2023].

Muehleisen, S. and Migge, B. (2005). *Politeness and Face in Caribbean Creoles*. [online] Google Books. John Benjamins Publishing. Available at:

[https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Politeness_and_Face_in_Caribbean_Creoles/krtwZBXmEg4C?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%27Bonjour%27+\(Hello\)+or+%27Merci%27+\(Thank+you\)+can+make+a+guest+feel+appreciated+and+respected.&pg=PA255&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Politeness_and_Face_in_Caribbean_Creoles/krtwZBXmEg4C?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%27Bonjour%27+(Hello)+or+%27Merci%27+(Thank+you)+can+make+a+guest+feel+appreciated+and+respected.&pg=PA255&printsec=frontcover) [Accessed 9 Jun. 2023].

Neuditschko, S. (2021). *SANDRA NEUDITSCHKO | Freelance Illustrator & Map Maker - Cheese Map France*. [online] sandraneuditschko.com. Available at: <https://sandraneuditschko.com/kopie-von-cheese-map-switzerland> [Accessed 9 Jun. 2023].

Ramsahai, S. (2016). *Re-conceptualising the Lewis model for addressing the challenges of diversity and social inclusion 1 Based on a critical discussion between Hofstede's and Lewis' model of culture*. [online] Available at: <https://zenwise-academy.com/article.Re-conceptualising.pdf>.

Rubel, W. (2011). *Bread: A Global History*. [online] Google Books. Reaktion Books. Available at: <https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Bread/SpHwukf9OUgC?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Bread+is+a+staple+in+French+dining&pg=PP1&printsec=frontcover> [Accessed 9 Jun. 2023].

ULIJN, J. and XIANGLING, L. (1995) Is interrupting impolite? Some temporal aspects of turn-taking in Chinese-Western and other intercultural business encounters. *Text & Talk*, Vol. 15 (Issue 4), pp. 589-628. <https://doi.org/10.1515/text.1.1995.15.4.589>

Wurtz, E. (2005). Intercultural Communication on Web sites: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Web sites from High-Context Cultures and Low-Context Cultures. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11(1), pp.274–299. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2006.tb00313.x>.

Zhou, K.Z., Brown, J.R. and Dev, C.S. (2009). Market orientation, competitive advantage, and performance: A demand-based perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 62(11), pp.1063–1070. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2008.10.001>.