How to Talk About Difference:
Leveraging Virtual Space in International Education

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Purpose of this Presentation

• Adobe Presenter
• Context
• Present an online learning module on culture
• My process
• Share some of the module

Be thinking about:
• What is relevant to your audience?
• How would you need to modify it to work for your audience?
Adobe Presenter

- Regular PowerPoint capabilities
- Record and synch the presentation
Goal of the Culture Module

• Neutral vocabulary to talk about difference
• It had to include something to take away
• For an audience with little or no prior cross-cultural experience
  – But must also to be relevant to students with previous experience
• Need to “sell it”

Why Hofstede?
• One model covers many bases
• Interactive website provides take-away tool
Situating Global Competence

The International Experience Requirement

Carlson Global Institute’s role
Defining Global Competence

“Wherever you are from and whatever your experience in other countries or with other cultures, this information will help start or deepen your understanding of difference and provide you with some vocabulary to use when talking about cultural differences.”
Understanding culture

What is Culture?

“Culture refers to values, beliefs, attitudes, preferences, customs, learning styles, communication styles, history... the sum total of what a particular group of people has created together, share, and transmit.”

R. Michael Paige
University of Minnesota

Inside Jokes and Icebergs

The Cultural Iceberg

10 % Easy to see
> customs
> mores
> courtesies

90 % Difficult to see
> values
> priorities
> assumptions

http://www.cross-culture.de/intercultural_coaching.htm
Introducing Hofstede

Importance of neutral language

Establishing credibility and relevance

Comparing Cultures

• Neutral language
  – Words like “strange” or “awesome” evaluate a difference rather than describe it

• Geert Hofstede
  – Dimensions of culture
    • They “do not ‘exist’ (in the literal sense); they are tools for analysis which may or may not clarify a situation”

• Dimensions compare without evaluating difference
Introducing the Dimensions

**Power Distance**
- How societies view inequalities between people:
  - High power distance societies have defined hierarchies and inequalities between people are accepted without justification
  - Low power distance societies view people as generally equal and demand justification for inequalities of power

**Individualism vs. Collectivism**
- Is your self-image defined as "I" or "we"?
  - Individualistic societies are defined by loose-knit social frameworks; the ultimate focus of a person's life is "I" and success of "I" comes before that of the group
  - Collectivist societies are defined by a tightly-knit social framework; loyalty to in-groups is of the utmost importance, even at the cost of the individual

**Performance vs. Consensus-Oriented**
- Performance-Oriented (Masculine) societies value being assertive, tough, and focused on material success
- Consensus-Oriented (Feminine) values modesty, tenderness, and concern for the quality of life

**Uncertainty Avoidance**
- A society's comfort with uncertainty and ambiguity:
  - Strong uncertainty avoidance countries maintain rigid codes of belief and behavior and are intolerant of rule breaking and unorthodox ideas
  - Weak uncertainty avoidance countries maintain a more relaxed attitude toward unstructured situations and new ideas

**Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation**
- How cultures prioritize past, present, and future:
  - Long-Term Orientation: Societies are pragmatic and values focus on preparing for the future
  - Short-Term Orientation: Society values focus more on the past and present

**Indulgence vs. Restraint**
- The extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses:
  - Indulgent societies allow relatively free gratification of basic and natural human drives related to enjoying life and having fun
  - Restrained societies suppress gratification of needs and regulate it by means of strict social norms
Then What?

Introducing Hofstede’s website

So What?

Final Reminders

Remember!

- Scores represent the average
- Some people *will* fit the model very well but some people *will not*

*Flexibility and adaptability are keys when working internationally*
In-Person Follow-up

In-person orientation

U.S., Argentina, and Chile

International Marketing Class

Use Hofstede’s Dimensions to market the iPhone 6 to U.S. Americans or to the Chinese
Questions?

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