

# NAVIGATING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN A GLOBAL WORLD



**Advanced C1-C2**

# 1

## Warm-Up

10-15 min

Make students start thinking with these warm-up questions

- What comes to mind when you hear the word culture?
- Have you ever experienced culture shock? What happened?
- What's something in your culture that might seem strange to foreigners?



# 2

## Reading

10-15 min



There is an audio version of this article



*"In today's globalized world, cultural misunderstandings can occur even in simple interactions.*

*A European manager once sent a direct email to a Japanese colleague requesting immediate action.*

*While the message seemed normal to the manager, it was perceived as rude and abrupt by the Japanese recipient, who valued indirect communication and group consensus.*



*Such differences in communication styles—direct vs. indirect, individualism vs. collectivism, high-context vs. low-context cultures—can lead to confusion, frustration, or even damaged professional relationships.*

*Cultural awareness is essential not only for preventing misunderstandings but also for building trust and collaboration in multicultural environments."*

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### **3** Comprehension

10-15 min



1. What caused the misunderstanding between the manager and the colleague?
  2. What does the article mean by "high-context" and "low-context" cultures? Can you give examples?
  3. How can cultural awareness help in professional or personal life?
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# 4 Vocabulary

10-15 min



- **Culture shock** – confusion or discomfort experienced when entering a different culture.
- **High-context culture** – communication relies heavily on non-verbal cues and shared understanding.
- **Low-context culture** – communication is explicit, clear, and direct.
- **Collectivism** – valuing the group over the individual.
- **Individualism** – prioritizing individual goals and independence.
- **Cross-cultural communication** – interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds.
- **Taboo** – a topic or behavior that is socially or culturally prohibited.

## 👉 Scenario Activity (Group Work):

- Give students short workplace or social scenarios where a cultural misunderstanding occurs (e.g., interrupting during conversation, refusing food, standing too close or too far).
  - In groups, students discuss:
    - a) What went wrong
    - b) What cultural values might be involved
    - c) How the situation could be handled better
  - Encourage use of the vocabulary from above.
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# 5

## Wrap-Up

10-15 min



**Encourage open discussion, allowing students to express their opinions freely.**

- Have you ever unintentionally offended someone from another culture? What did you learn?
  - What cultural values are most important in your country?
  - Do you think it's possible to be "culturally neutral"? Why or why not?
  - How can we become more culturally sensitive without losing our own identity?
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