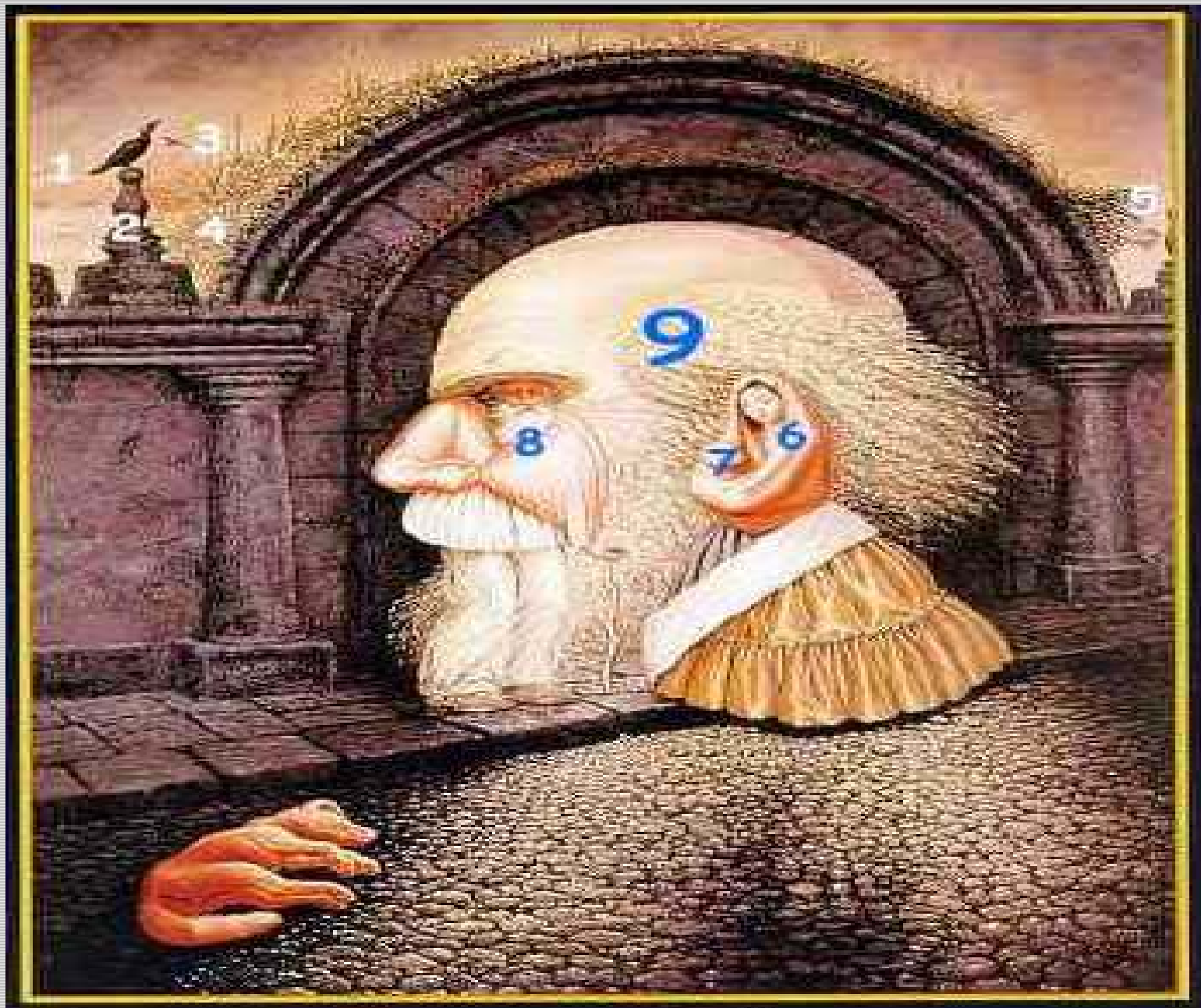

BUILDING BRIDGES

with Farès Chmait





Apart from the old man, there are 9 people in this picture. Can you spot them?



What are the challenges?

We only see what we want to see!

We may see what others don't!

We don't see what the other person sees!

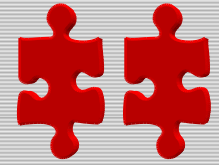
BEWARE OF YOUR CERTAINTIES!

Respect differences and work together

Anthropologists have discovered that, when faced with interactions we don't understand, we tend to view the other party as:

- “abnormal”
- “weird”
- “wrong”

Be aware of cultural differences

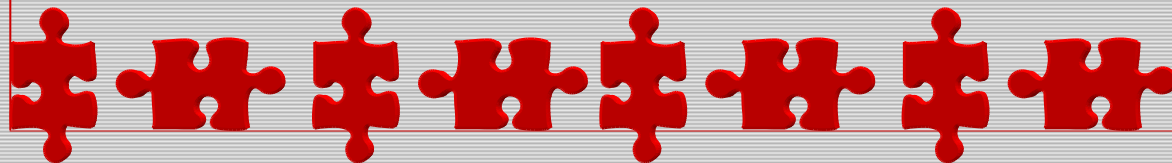


Recognizing cultural differences is the first step toward understanding one another and establishing a positive working environment.

Use these differences to challenge your own assumptions about the “right” way of doing things and as an opportunity to learn new ways to solve problems.

“If you are different from me, my brother,
far from hurting me, you enrich me.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry



Is it a rabbit ?



Russia and France = zero

Brazil = insult

USA and U.K. = A-OK

Japan = money

Right or wrong? No, just different!

Every culture has its own ideas regarding the “right” or “wrong” way to behave.

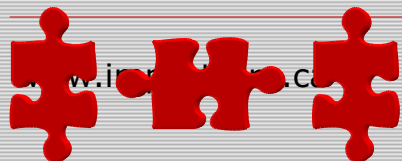
Always remember that a behavioural trait may be culturally determined.

Stop, wait a minute...

Canada & USA = stop

Greece = moutza or
confrontation

West Africa = an insult (even
more worse than the upraised
middle finger in North America)



Avoid misunderstandings

Misinterpretations, misunderstandings and problems often arise because each side tends to view the other from its own cultural viewpoint.

Hook 'em horns!



Pinkie and index finger raised and the two middle fingers folded down.

USA = fans of the University of Texas Longhorns

Norway = symbol of satanism

Hawaii = hang loose

Certain regions of Africa = insult

And for millions of Italians it is the cornuto, signalling, "Your spouse is unfaithful."



Culture determines behaviour and customs

When looking at another culture, there's no "right" or "wrong"; instead, behaviour and customs are different.

To look or not to look?

In Native American, many Asian, and some Hispanic cultures, looking down and avoiding direct eye contact is a sign of respect.

In North America, "The cheapest, most effective way to connect with people is to look them in the eye."

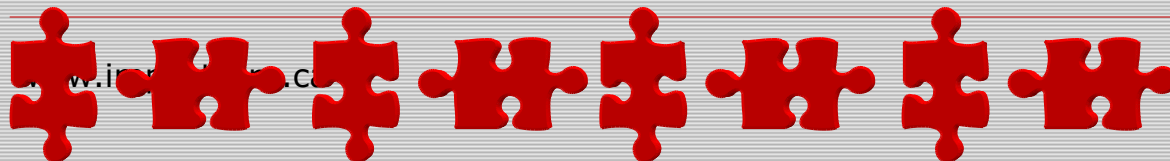
"Most people in Arab cultures share a great deal of eye contact and may regard too little as disrespectful."



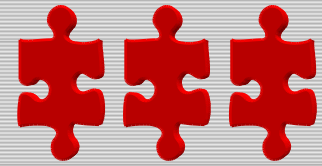
Yes, no, maybe

North American head signals for "yes" and "no" are reversed in Bulgaria.

In Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries, you must eat and drink with your right hand as the left hand is considered unclean.



Thumb up or down?



Different contexts = different meanings



Islamic countries = upraised
middle finger in North America

USA = No. 1

Bangladesh = taunting

¡Hola! ¿Qué pasa?

Standing with one's hands on the hips signifies anger or hostility in many cultures, such as Malaysia, Argentina, and Mexico.



“Cultural sharing is the first part
of understanding.”

Kent Nagano

What is culture?

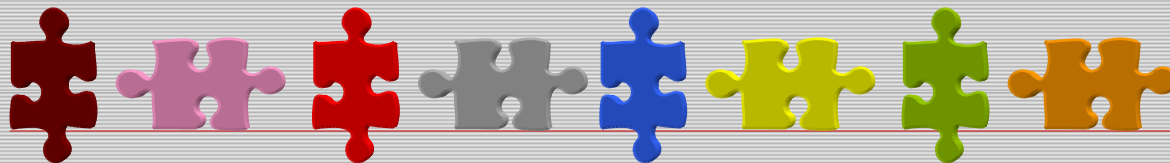
Values, norms and patterns of conduct that are shared by members of society and which influence their behaviour.

These shared values within a society are learnt and are not passed from generation to generation biologically.

Recognize cultural differences

Sensitivity, tolerance and open-mindedness are required to:

- understand cultural codes and relationships
- attain intercultural competence



Always remember

You can't plug human conduct into an equation.

Avoid categorization.

Every person is unique.

We are all the fruit of our own "historical true-life" and "personal adventure."

PACING AND LEADING

The Secret of establishing rapport

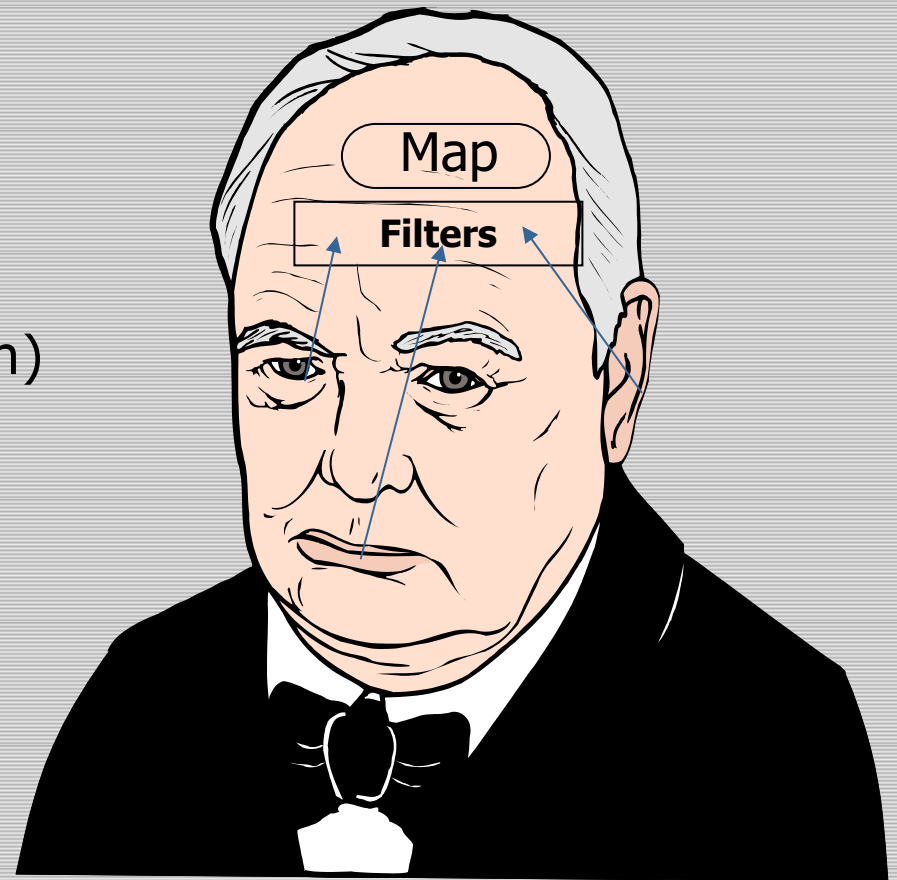
Pacing is a way of establishing:

- trust
- credibility
- rapport

With pacing, you're basically saying:
"You're safe with me and you can trust me."

Representational systems

- V Visual (sight)
- A Auditory (hearing)
- K Kinesthetic (feeling/action)
- O Olfactory (smell)
- G Gustatory (taste)



How we interpret reality

V^I

A

K

O

G

FILTERS

- Selection / omission
- Generalization
- Distortion
- Beliefs
- Values
- Memories
- Meta Programs

V^E

A

K

O

G

Words, words, words

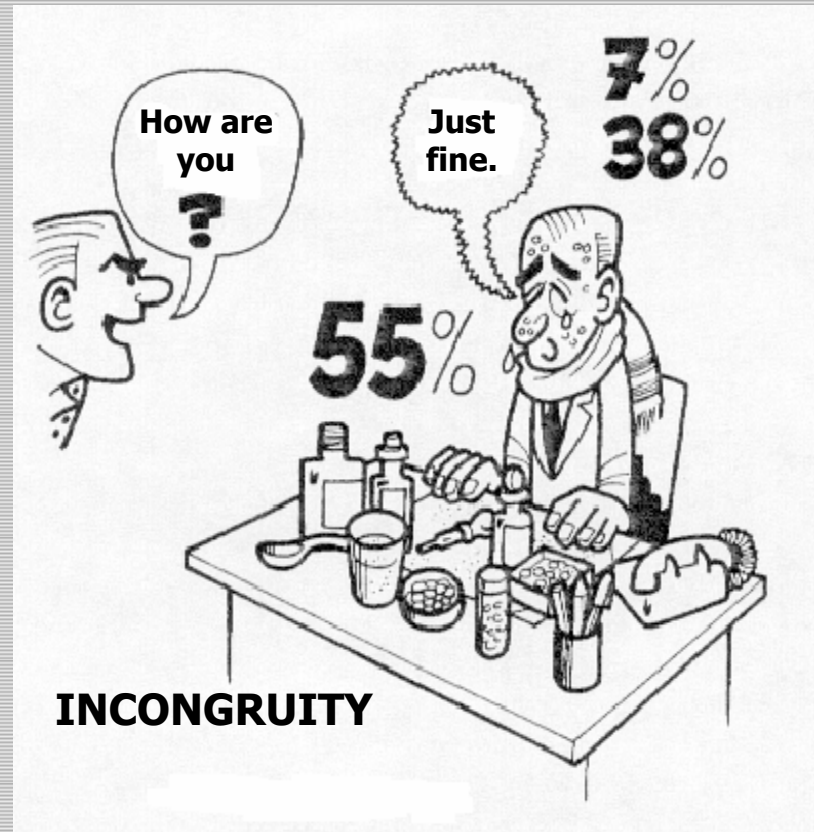
Listen carefully to the words people use.

Words like:

- “see,” “look,” “watch”
- “hear,” “listen,” “it rings a bell”
- “touch,” “feel,” “explore”



Principles



Going beyond words

It's all about people

No one can become a permanent success without including others.

- List the people who can help you reach a goal
- List the ways in which each can help

Your personality is your greatest asset or liability

- List traits of a pleasing personality
- Going the extra mile
- The most successful men and women are those who serve the greatest number of people
- Delivering better service than you are paid to provide
- Doing it all the time with a pleasing, positive attitude

Learn from setbacks and adversity

- Every setback contains the seed of an equal or greater benefit
- Review obstacles and what happened after encountering them
- Remember that many setbacks actually led to positive things (knowledge and inspiration)
- Never, never, never quit

The importance of cooperation

- Harmonious cooperation is a priceless asset you can acquire in proportion to how much you give
- Think of ways in which you can use your skills and knowledge to help others (especially if they've helped you in some way)

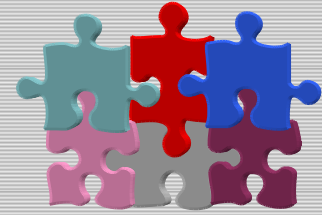
Frames of reference

People with different cultural, educational, scientific and business backgrounds will bring different frames of reference to a problem and can spark an exciting and dynamic cross-pollination of ideas.

Put differences to work for you

Inspire innovation and uncover strategic competitive advantages by:

leveraging, rather than diminishing, the
play of opposing forces



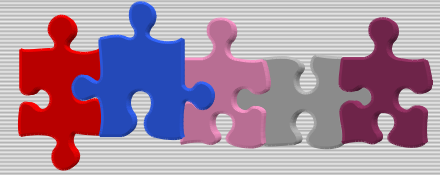
Working together

Six types of cultural diversity.

Different:

- 1) Communication styles
- 2) Attitudes towards conflict
- 3) Approaches to completing tasks
- 4) Decision-making styles
- 5) Attitudes towards disclosure
- 6) Approaches to knowing

Tips on intercultural collaboration



- 1) Actively support the intercultural team's shared objectives
- 2) Speak openly about any unclear issues and gaps in understanding
- 3) Be aware of cultural differences, respect them and use them as an incentive to create something new
- 4) Remember that English is a living language and therefore meanings vary from region to region
- 5) Don't view intercultural experience as an obstacle, but as a means for personal enrichment

Cultivate a positive mental attitude

Your thoughts determine your attitudes.

In turn, attitudes shape outcomes.

Therefore, be careful what you wish for, for you will surely achieve it.