

## Day 19 Discussion Script – Understanding Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions

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**Leader:** Imagine you were to give these questions to employees of a major multinational company with offices in 50 different countries.

On which of these questions would you expect to see a great deal of variation **between individuals?**

On which of these questions would you expect to see a great deal of variation **between countries?**

Do you think that, in general, variation would be greater **between individuals within the same country** or **between different countries?**

*Some possible response templates:*

I'd expect Question \_\_\_\_ to have a great deal of variation between individuals because \_\_\_\_\_.

I'd expect Question \_\_\_\_ to have a great deal of variation between countries because \_\_\_\_\_.

I imagine that overall, variation would be greater between \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

**Leader:** What differences in cultural values do you think might affect employees answers to these questions?

*Some possible response templates:*

I would imagine that \_\_\_\_\_

**Leader:** How much do you think your own beliefs and values have been influenced by the norms of your culture?

Which of your beliefs and values do you think are **in keeping with** the norms of your culture?

Which of your beliefs and values do you think are **at odds with** the norms of your culture?

*Some possible response templates:*

One thing I believe that I think is in keeping with the norms of my culture is \_\_\_\_\_.

One thing I believe that I think is at odds with the norms of my culture is \_\_\_\_\_.

A statistical analysis<sup>4</sup> of the country averages of the answers to questions about the values of similar IBM employees in different countries revealed common problems, but with solutions differing from country to country, in the following areas:

- Social inequality, including the relationship with authority
- The relationship between the individual and the group
- Concepts of masculinity and femininity: the social and emotional implications of having been born as a boy or a girl
- Ways of dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity, which turned out to be related to the control of aggression and the expression of emotions