

Keeping a Multicultural Organization Safe

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MultiCultural
Business
Solutions

1. Key Concepts Definition

Culture is the way we do things when nobody tells us what to do



1. Key Concepts

Visible and Invisible Differences

Dress code, Org chart, Office layout, Presentations

Concept of time

Communication – verbal and non-verbal

Feedback

Sense of hierarchy - initiative

Individualism – team work

Risk tolerance – decision-making

Problem-solving, Career management

And many other areas...

1. Key Concepts

Generalizations vs. Stereotypes

Generalizations	Stereotypes
Provide general characteristics based on cultural and social factors	Present a fixed and inflexible image of a group
Recognize individual differences	Ignore individual exceptions
Describe the behaviour neutrally	Are judgemental and negative
Help understand people's behaviour from their perspective	Do damage when they are applied to people one does not know
E.g. I know that time is more flexible in Mexico than in Canada, so I will not interpret the late arrival of my Mexican colleague as disrespectful.	E.g. Mexicans are always late, so I will give my Mexican new hire an appointment 30 minutes before my target to ensure he/she is on time.

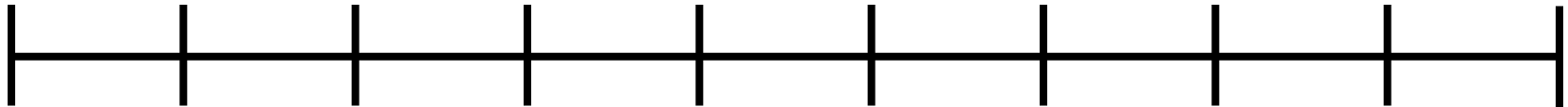
2. Hierarchy

Manager – Employee Relationships

I prefer working for managers who

**give me enough freedom
so that I can determine the
best direction for myself**

**give me clear directions
so that I know what
they want me to do.**



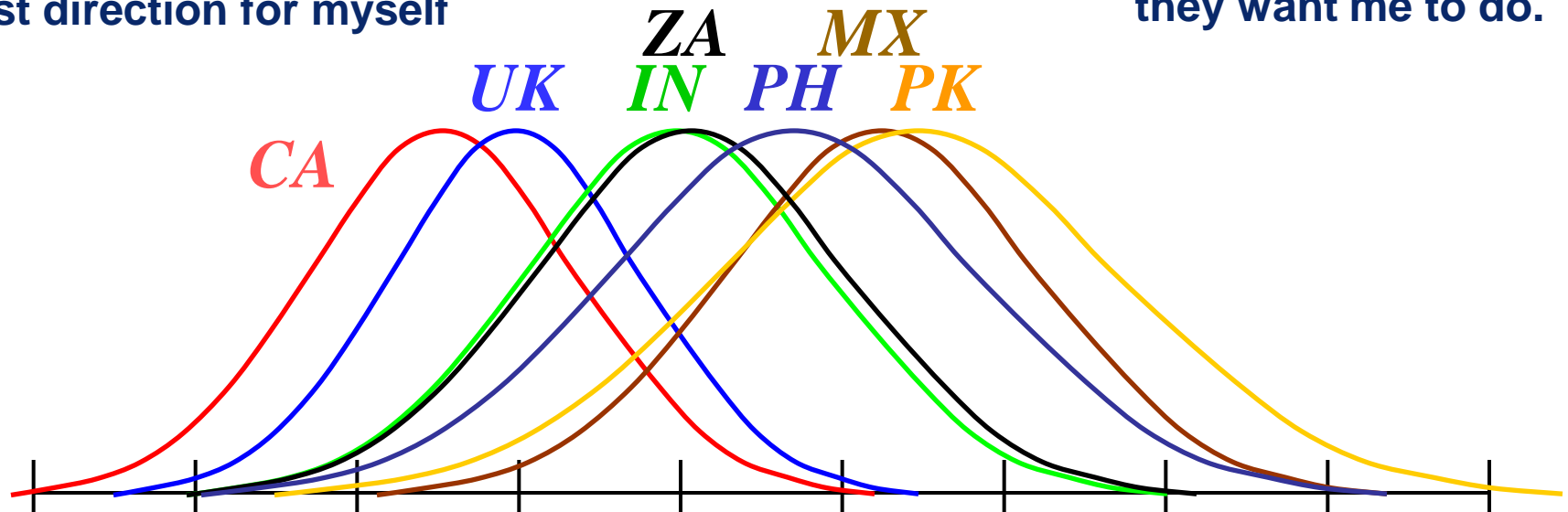
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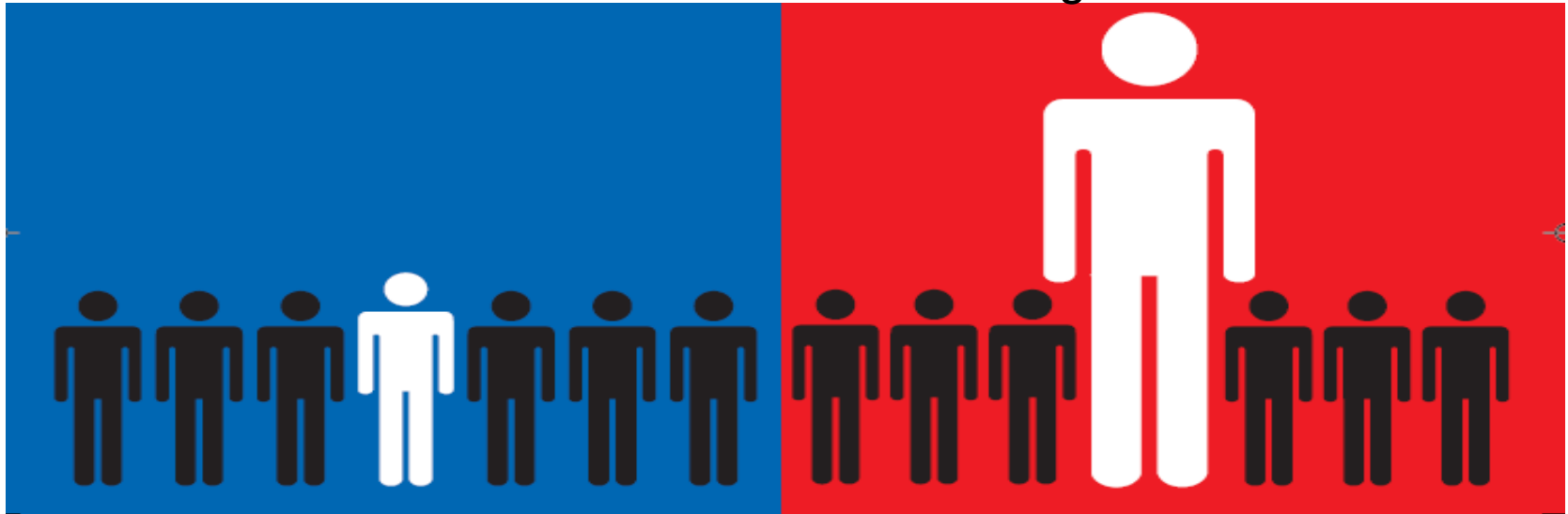
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3. Hierarchy The Manager

Canada

Most home countries
of immigrants in Canada



Adapted from the work of Yang Liu

3. Communicating More Effectively

Verbal Communication

Challenges

- Speaking a Second Language / connotations / accents

Suggestions to bridge the gap

- Understand that people may speak their first language to blow off steam
- Don't ask people to repeat and don't give up; ask them to repeat once, then to rephrase
- State what you understood and what you did not
- Speak like news anchors
- Encourage everyone to continuously improve their communication skills and ESL speakers to take accent modification courses (if applicable)

4. Putting It All Together

Top 10 Tips

1. Awareness is 50% of the solution
2. Accept that cultural differences create both challenges and opportunities and that challenges come first
3. Patience is a virtue
4. Communication is not just about sending messages, it is also about ensuring that messages are received the way they were meant to be sent
5. Monitor the impact you have on others; if the impact you have is not the one you want to have, stop and clarify

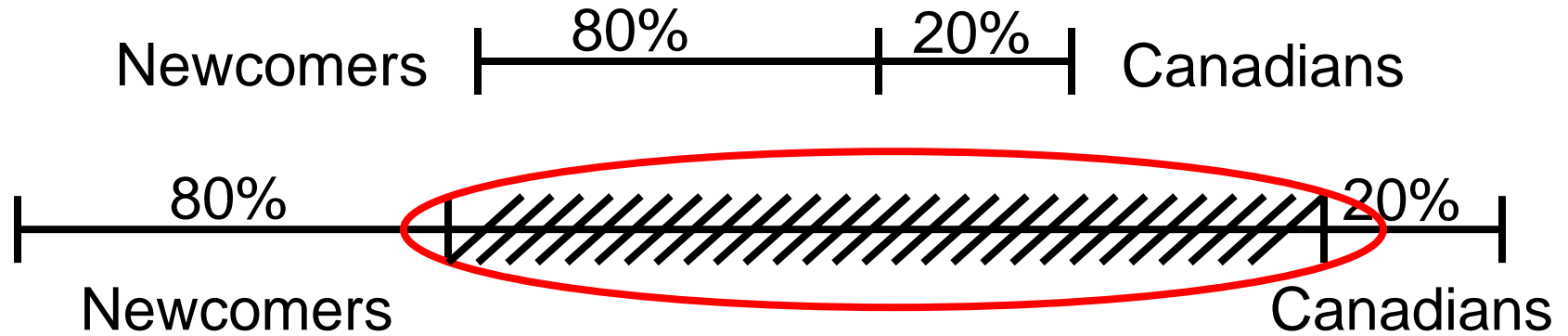
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Top 10 Tips

6. Separate impact from intention
7. Consider negative feelings as red flags that you may have misunderstood the real intent of your counterpart
8. The golden rule needs to be replaced by the platinum rule, since being helpful or respectful means different things to different people
9. Explain how you measure people's performance in detail
10. Analyze the impact of cultural differences in your organization and take it into consideration

4. Putting It All Together

Who should adapt to whom?



Newcomers need to learn the unwritten rules of Canadian organizations and follow them

Canadians need to explain these rules and give feedback

4. Putting It All Together For More Information

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