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## CPD Mentor Workshop: Mentoring across cultures conversations and conflict

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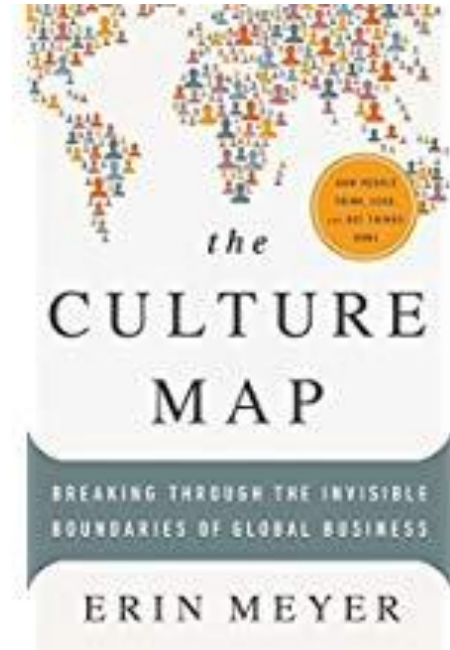


# Overview of today

- National cultural characteristics
- Introducing coaching to a Chinese context
- Organisational culture
- Difficult conversations
- Handling conflict

# Erin Meyer's culture map

*When examining how people from different cultures relate to one another, what matters is not the absolute position of either culture on the scale but rather the relative position of the two cultures. It is this relative positioning that determines how people view one another.*



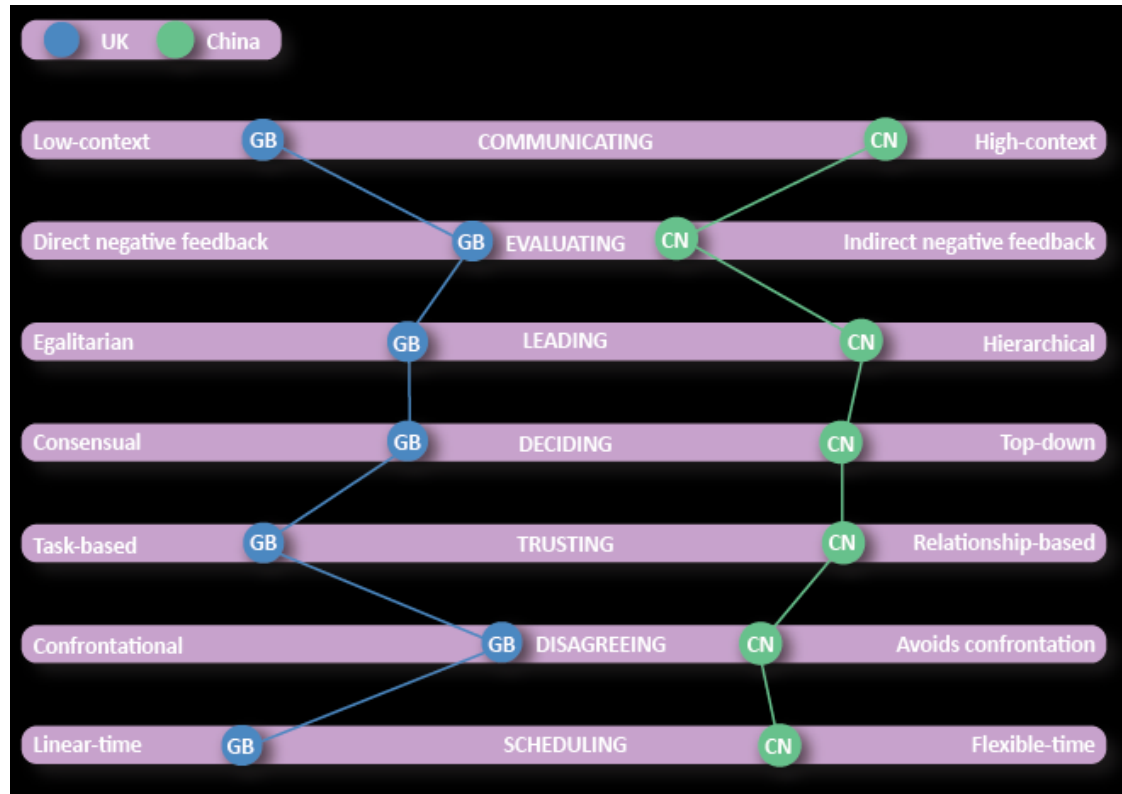
# Meyer's culture map: eight dimensions

- **Communicating** – Are they low-context (simple, verbose and clear), or high-context (rich deep meaning in interactions)?
- **Evaluating** – When giving Negative feedback does one give it directly, or prefer being indirect and discreet?
- **Leading** – Are people in groups egalitarian, or do they prefer hierarchy?
- **Deciding** – Are decisions made in consensus, or made top-down?

# Meyer's culture map: eight dimensions

- **Trusting** – Do people base trust on how well they know each other, or how well they do work together?
- **Disagreeing** – Are disagreements tackled directly, or do people prefer to avoid confrontations?
- **Scheduling** – Do they perceive time as absolute linear points, or consider it a flexible range?
- **Persuading** – Do they like to hear specific cases and examples, or prefer holistic detailed explanations?

# Meyer's culture map: Comparison of UK and China



# Introducing coaching to a Chinese context - the experiences of Will Percy

## Power distance (Geert Hofstede)

The extent to which members who are less powerful in a society accept and also expect that the distribution of power takes place unequally.

**China: 80    UK: 35**

*The high power distance in Chinese culture ... may be a barrier to implementation. The hierarchical environment may cause the coachee to desire a more directive approach and a relationship that is not on an equal footing... [The coach] is expected to be someone who is more senior, more qualified and a source of wisdom. (Will Percy)*

In his conclusion, Will recognises that Power distance is a significant cultural factor that might suggest a preference for a directive style of coaching. He does not agree with this, however, and recommends that someone coaching in China needs to skillfully engage in the coaching dance.

# THE COACHING DANCE

**MANAGER-CENTRED**  
*(Telling)*

**PERFORMER-CENTRED**  
*(Asking)*

**GOALS AND TARGETS**

**MOTIVATION**

**FEEDBACK**

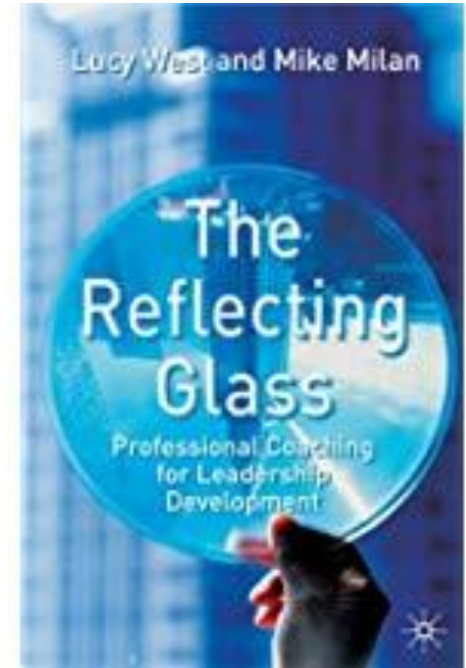
**LEARNING**



# Introducing coaching to a Chinese context - the views of two coaches interviewed by Will Percy

- Relationships took longer than usual to form, though they did become deep and often discussed personal issues.
- Listening was intensive and energy draining, given the need to listen for what was not being said.
- Follow up activities were often not completed by the coachees, frequently because a superior or colleague had not played their part. The coachees in turn did not want to speak badly of their superior or colleague, or admit they hadn't carried out the action.
- Playback and feedback were initially difficult due to concerns about 'face', though this became less of an issue as relationships progressed and trust deepened.

*The more a coach works across cultures, the less directive he or she can afford to be as it is very likely that the coach's advice or guidance will not be appropriate for the different culture. Development coaching therefore seems particularly well positioned for working across cultures because of its non-directive, non-expert philosophy. The development coach's fundamental task is to enter his or her client's frame of reference, of which national culture is just another dimension.*



# Exercise

What examples do you have of needing to adjust your conversation or behaviour when interacting with someone from a different national culture?

# Edgar Schein's model of organisational culture

**Artifacts** are the overt and obvious elements of an organization. They're typically the things even an outsider can see, such as furniture and office layout, dress norms, inside jokes, and mantras.

<https://hbr.org/2014/12/how-to-tell-if-your-company-has-a-creative-culture>

# Edgar Schein's model of organisational culture

**Espoused values** are the company's declared set of values and norms. Values affect how members interact and represent the organization. Most often, values are reinforced in public declarations, like the aptly named list of core values.

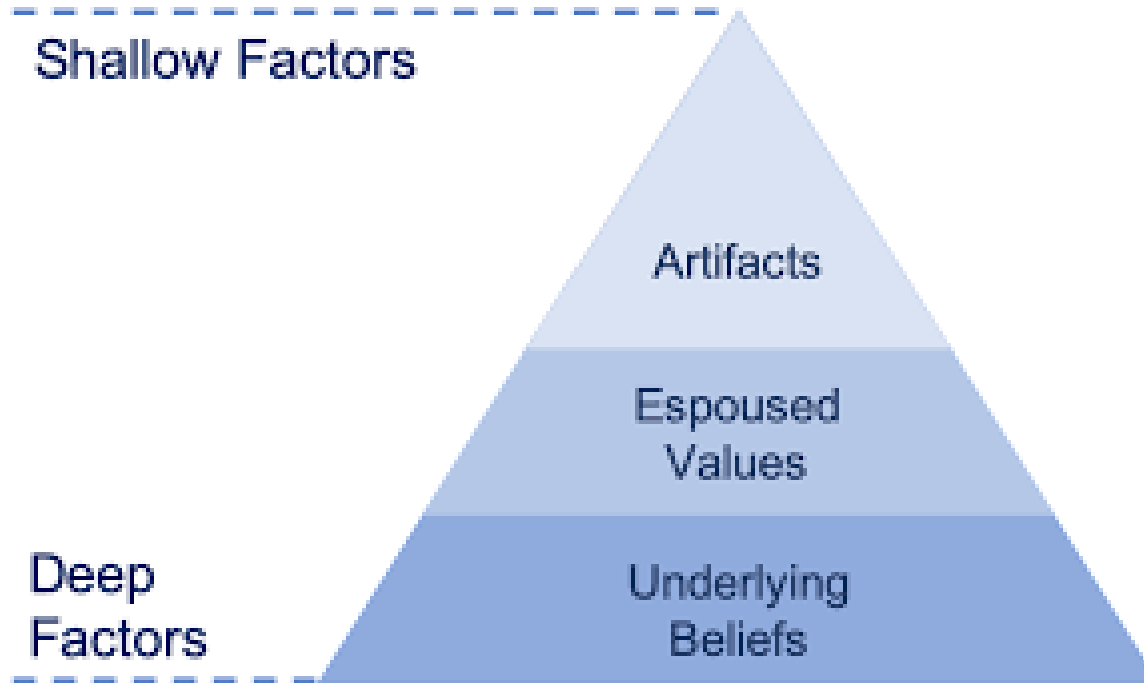
<https://hbr.org/2014/12/how-to-tell-if-your-company-has-a-creative-culture>

# Edgar Schein's model of organisational culture

**Shared basic assumptions** are the bedrock of organizational culture. They are the beliefs and behaviors so deeply embedded that they can sometimes go unnoticed. But basic assumptions are the essence of culture, and the plumb line that espoused values and artifacts square themselves against.

<https://hbr.org/2014/12/how-to-tell-if-your-company-has-a-creative-culture>

# Edgar Schein's model of organisational culture



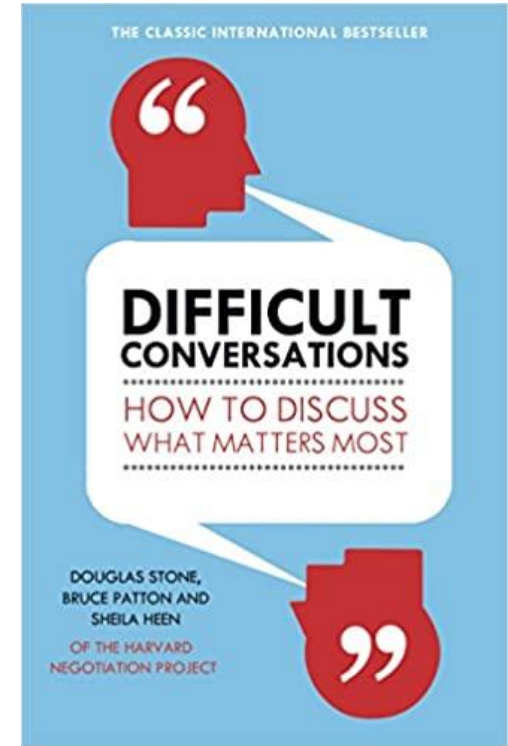
What are the distinctive aspects of the culture of your own organisation that someone acting as a coach or a consultant would need to understand?



# Difficult conversations

“A difficult conversation is anything you find it hard to talk about.”

Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton and Sheila Heen



# Any difficult conversation is actually three conversations:

## What happened?

Most difficult conversations involve disagreements about what has happened or what should happen.

## The feelings conversation

Every difficult conversation also asks and answers questions about feelings. These feelings may not be addressed directly, but they will leak in anyway.

## The identity conversation

This is the conversation we each have with ourselves about what this situation means to us.

# Exercise

What conversations do you yourself find it difficult to conduct with a mentee?

*Please type your answers in the text box.*

# Exercise

What examples do you have of conversations that one of your mentees finds difficult?

# Key skills for any conversation

- **Listen** to understand the other person's world
- **Play back** to check your understanding and to build the relationship
- **Ask open questions** to find out more about what's important for the other person
- **Voice** your own position and views clearly and assertively

# Key skills for a mentoring conversation

- **Listen** to understand the mentee's world
- **Play back** to check your understanding and to build the relationship
- **Ask open questions** to raise the mentee's awareness or to encourage them to take responsibility for action
- **Offer your thoughts** selectively and provisionally

# Rehearsing a difficult conversation

Place an empty chair near the mentee. They need to imagine that the other person is sitting opposite them in the empty chair. Invite them to speak “directly” to the other person, saying the things that matter or need to be said.

Generate feedback from the mentee, or give feedback.

Invite the mentee to try again.

They might swap chairs a number of times, encouraging a “conversation” between them and the other person.



## Exercise:

# Rehearsing a difficult conversation remotely

Imagine that your mentoring conversation is via telephone or Skype.

How might you modify the empty chair exercise to help your mentee to rehearse a difficult conversation?

*Type your answers in the text box.*

Any questions or comments on  
the empty chair exercise?

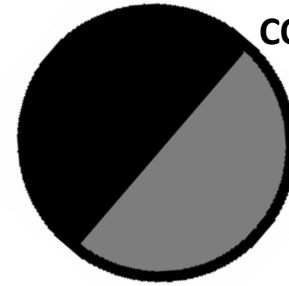
# Five ways of handling conflict

The Thomas-Kilmann framework

ASSERTIVENESS



**COMPETING**  
Win - Lose



**COLLABORATING**  
Win - Win



**COMPROMISING**  
Win - Lose



**AVOIDING**  
Lose - Lose



**ACCOMMODATING**  
Win - Lose

COOPERATIVENESS



# Basic assertiveness and Two-way assertiveness

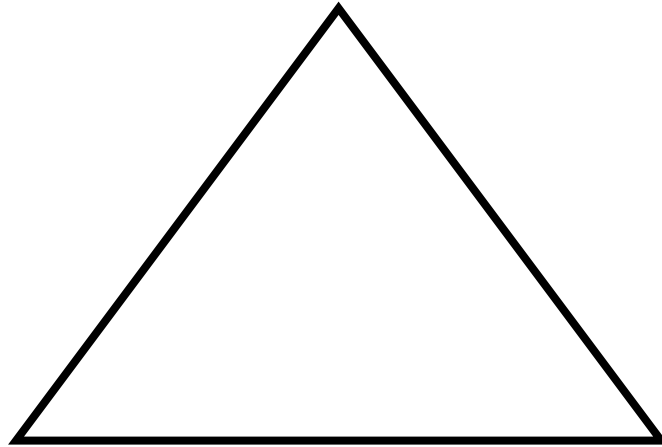
Assertiveness is the ability to state clearly and confidently what you want or need in a situation

and

to allow the other party to state clearly what they want.

**ASSERTIVE**

**Win - Win**



**PASSIVE**

**Lose - Win**

**AGGRESSIVE**

**Win - Lose**

# Which of the five conflict-handling styles do you use most frequently?

- 1) Avoiding
- 2) Accommodating
- 3) Competing
- 4) Compromising
- 5) Collaborating

Please vote (1) to (5)

What are you taking from today's webinar?

Capture your own reflections first.

Then type one or two key takeaways in the text box.



# Useful Links

- **Mentor Online Area** - <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wbs/central/corporate-relations/careersplus/wbsmentoring/mentor-area>
- Professional Networks - [www.wbs.ac.uk/about/networks/professional/](http://www.wbs.ac.uk/about/networks/professional/)
- WBS Careers Blog - <https://www.wbs.ac.uk/blogs/staff/>

## Exclusive WBS Community Resources – log in ([“how-to-log-in-guide”](#))

- CareerPlus Shop - [www.wbs.ac.uk/shop/careersplus](http://www.wbs.ac.uk/shop/careersplus)
- Career Management Module– [my.wbs.ac.uk/go/career-management](http://my.wbs.ac.uk/go/career-management)
- DLMBA Mentoring Module - [https://my.wbslx.com/\\$/\\$\\$/event/lx/course/95812/series/542645/](https://my.wbslx.com/$/$$/event/lx/course/95812/series/542645/)
- WBS Mentoring Programme – [my.wbs.ac.uk/go/mentoring](http://my.wbs.ac.uk/go/mentoring)
- Alumni webpage – [www.wbs.ac.uk/about/alumni/](http://www.wbs.ac.uk/about/alumni/)

# Feedback

We'd welcome your feedback on the session:

[https://wbs.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_8IAzESjOd8DOTsx](https://wbs.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8IAzESjOd8DOTsx)

# Thank you!

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