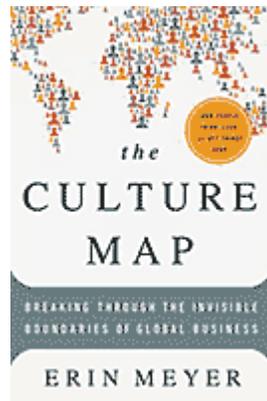


For decades, authors such as Hall, Hofstede or Trompenaars have dominated the field of intercultural research. The models they presented, commonly referred to as 'cultural dimensions,' aimed to identify differences across countries and cultures; they are still widely used in cross-cultural education and training around the world.

With *The Culture Map*, INSEAD professor Erin Meyer now boldly presents a new and different set of dimensions, a map of eight continuums structured along the lines of how people interact: communicating, evaluating, persuading, leading, deciding, trusting, disagreeing, and scheduling.



What sets this model apart is its practicality. Where others discuss value differences, Meyer concentrates on resulting behaviors; where others analyze how values manifest themselves, she focuses on strategies for crossing cultural gaps and reconciling different ways of getting things done. All the while, the author strikes an effective balance between oversimplifying and getting carried away with complexity. Meyer uses a wide range of stories, her own and others', to illustrate essential concepts and highlight critical caveats.

*The Culture Map* encourages readers to think beyond the obvious. For instance, when discussing levels of directness in communication, Meyer does not stop at warning Westerners of the importance of paying attention to the subtle ways in which messages are commonly worded in Asia, as most authors in the field do, but also emphasizes the 'inverse' risk: those used to highly indirect communication styles may sense "between-the-lines" messages that the sender had no intention of sending.

Thankfully, Meyer frequently discusses strategies for working across such cultural differences. In doing so, she again sometimes takes the reader further than many other authors do: in addition to sharing ideas for working with those with a strong preference towards one or the other end of the cultural continuums she presents, the author at times discusses what has become the potentially biggest challenge for those working in a truly global context: strategies for when "you have a blend of many cultures all on one team." If anything, readers might wish the author had ventured into this subject even more frequently.

Overall, *The Culture Map* indeed presents a framework for *breaking through the invisible boundaries of global business*, as the book's subtitle promises. Wisely building upon the works of others, Meyer nevertheless offers a much more practical and immediately applicable set of strategies for success in a global business environment, which earns her book a strong recommendation.



Lothar Katz is the founder of Leadership Crossroads. He has a wealth of experience in achieving productive cooperation across cultures and driving business success on a global scale.

A seasoned former executive of Fortune 500 company, Texas Instruments, he regularly interacted with employees, customers, outsourcing partners, and third parties in numerous countries around the world, including many parts of Asia. Mr. Katz is the author of "Negotiating International Business" (2007) and "The Global Business Culture Guide" (2014).

