



NAVIGATING THE INTERVIEW

A Guide for Candidates





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Navigating the Interview guides for immigrants and HR professionals, undertaken by the Center for Intercultural Education at NorQuest College have benefitted from the support and commitment of a number of individuals and organizations. Their dedication to this project has resulted in providing HR professionals and immigrant professionals with resources that will guide them in exploring, understanding and enhancing the effectiveness of the job interview in Canadian companies. These resources are intended to support immigrant professionals to find the job that fits their skills and qualifications and to support HR professionals to find the candidate that fits the job.

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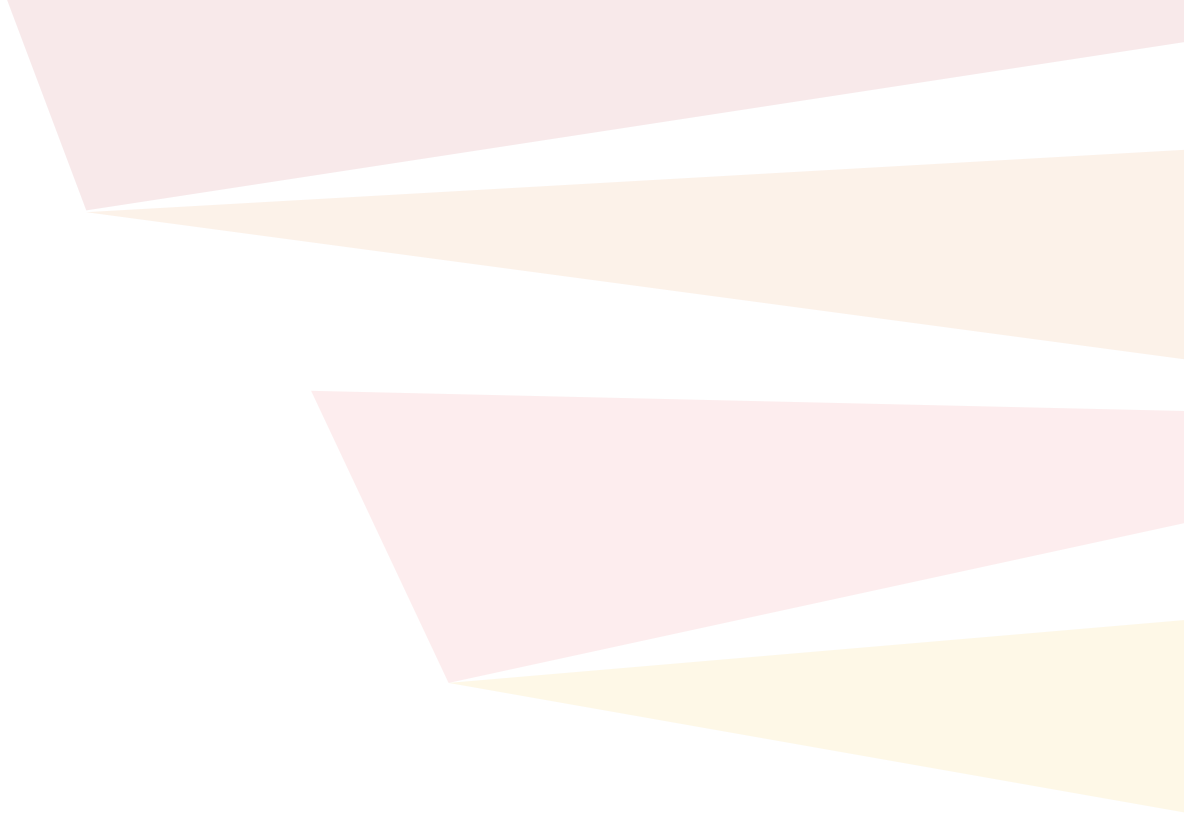
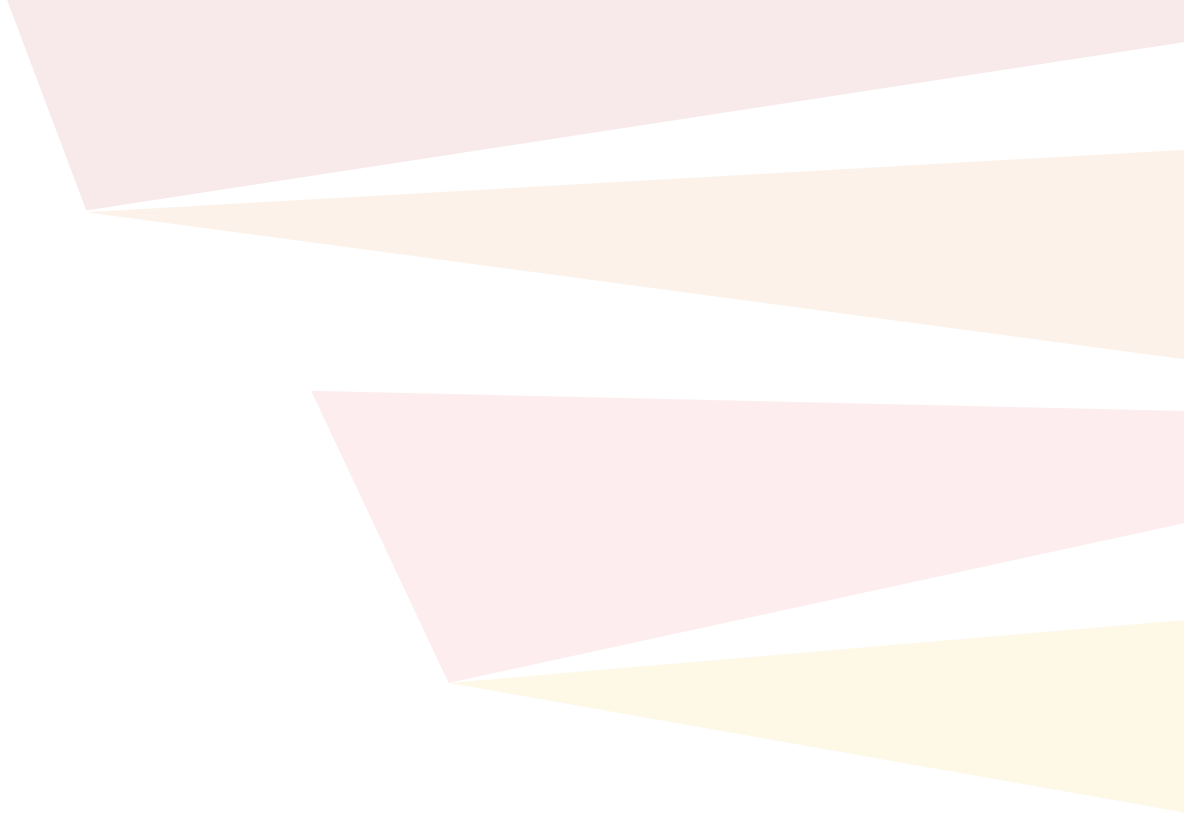


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I. INTRODUCTION

Canadians recognize the value internationally educated professionals can bring to the national market. Michael Couteau, Provincial Minister of Citizenship and Immigration for Ontario, recently made the case for hiring skilled immigrants, saying, “The need for global talent to remain competitive in the global market has intensified... we need to attract the best and brightest from around the world.”¹

Seven of the top 10 brands were founded by immigrants, he points out. He also notes that immigrants can help companies tap into global trade, and that newcomers complement the skills of the domestic labor force by bringing new investments and innovative practices.

However, when hiring across cultures, there are certain challenges that must be overcome to ensure candidates are putting their best foot forward, and to allow companies to assess candidates for all the skills they bring. Currently only 24% of foreign educated immigrants are working in their professions (compared with 64% of Canadians).²

Culturally diverse professionals can't assume that Canadian employers hold similar values, or would if they were given the opportunity. Our cultural upbringing informs our sense about the way things are and the way things should be. Cultural elements consciously or unconsciously influence how we talk, think and act. This creates challenges in communicating across cultures, which both employers and candidates must work to bridge.

Despite valuing intercultural skills and desiring the best candidate, employers will generally measure performance from the cultural context of Canadian workplace standards. Furthermore employers don't often screen intentionally for intercultural skills as an asset in the recruitment process,³ or have any formal assessments for these skills. It is often left up to job candidates to demonstrate them.

The Candidate's Guide to Navigating the Interview was designed to inform the perspective of an IEP seeking a leadership position in Canada. The guide works with some of the misunderstandings that arise in job interviews to provide information and suggest tasks to build skills that may lead to increase adaptations in the interview process (short term and long term).

This guide presents information to help candidates understand the Canadian context and become aware of how to effectively demonstrate their knowledge, skills and experience in an interview. The guide is based on the Navigating the Interview videos and works with some of the misunderstandings portrayed to build knowledge, skill and experience for individuals and facilitator/trainers use to enhance effective communication and understanding of Canadian based interviews.

¹ Coteau, M., (March 14, 2014) ON Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Ontario's Clarion Call for Putting Diversity to Work. Retrieved June, 2014 from www.hireimmigrants.ca

² Stats Canada (2006.) Community Profiles. Retrieved April 2014 from <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/subject-sujet/theme-theme.action?pid=3867&lang=eng&more=0>

³ British Council, (2012). Culture at work: the value of intercultural skills in the workplace. Retrieved May, 2014 from www.britishcouncil.org p.14

FURTHER EXPLORATION FOR CANDIDATES

Intercultural competence is an approach that can engage more than one perspective. It can be used as a framework for engaging with diversity based on the recognition of one's own values, experiences and challenges and the examination of one's own point of view in consideration of another's values, experiences and challenges. It uses a set of reflective skills that includes 1) considering the two sides of the communication 2) looking at the benefits of each option with an open mind 3) examining the options for similarities and differences of the benefits and values that you want to keep and 4) exploring the possibilities of how the options can work together. From an intercultural perspective, we develop from reflecting on the pros and cons of different perspectives, picking a side and defending the choice to being able to see and use the benefits of both perspectives. In Navigating the Interview we support using the benefits of both perspectives—immigrant candidates and HR professionals—through a two-pronged approach to the interview which allows for hiring the best candidates and building successful, diverse teams in the workplace.

II. USING THIS RESOURCE

Navigating the Interview resources were created to encourage interviewers and candidates alike to understand and navigate the “unwritten rules” of the Canadian job interview.

Navigating the Interview Guides helps employers and candidates overcome the barriers to hiring, by addressing these barriers from both sides:

1. *Navigating the Interview: A Guide for Human Resources* helps Canadian employers adapt their hiring practices to enable them to hire more effectively from a diverse talent pool.
2. *Navigating the Interview: A Guide for Candidates* helps internationally educated professional (IEP) candidates prepare and present themselves more effectively to prospective employers in Canada.

The resource contains two main parts: the videos and these guides. The videos portray how culturally informed expectations and behaviors can show up in an interview. The accompanying guides are based on the videos and build knowledge, skills and practices internationally educated professionals and employers alike to enhance effective communication and understanding in Canadian-based interviews.

Navigating the Interview video resources consist of a Canadian job interview panel with three interviewers who sequentially interview four job candidates for a team management position in an engineering capacity. In 2010, Alberta’s highest permanent residents among new arrivals came from Asia/Pacific (18,202 or 55.8 per cent); Africa/Middle East (6,045 or 18.5 per cent) and UK/Europe (4,817 or 14.8 per cent).⁴ The four interview candidates in the videos present these three generalized cultural perspectives, plus a Canadian one.

Each interview follows the same interview process: Greetings; Introduction; Small Talk; Transition to Formal Interview; Six Interview Questions; and Closing the Interview and Departure. The four candidates respond to the same interview procedure including the six interview questions. Each interview is followed by a brief phone conversation that takes place outside the interview room where the candidates share their thoughts on the interview with a friend. Finally, there is a debriefing by the panel who informally discusses their impressions of the candidates prior to making their more formal selection.

The interview questions in the videos reflect essential skills for most new jobs (beyond the commonly defined essential skills)⁵: high level communication skills, working in teams, critical thinking and intercultural skills.

The guide helps users examine and evaluate how these skills are assessed and accounted for, across diverse cultures, in the hiring process. Reading through the sections and working through the practices will encourage thoughtful reflection, leading to more informed actions in communicating across cultural differences successfully.

Used together, it is our hope that the videos and guide will help candidates to communicate more pragmatically as expected in a Canadian context and subsequently compete more effectively for positions.

⁴ Stats Canada (2006.) Community Profiles.

⁵ Alboim, Naomi, (2011). Planning for the future: Immigration and integration going forward presentation at NorQuest College. Edmonton



III. EXPLORING CANADIAN HIRING PRACTICES

When interviewing new candidates, the 'direct report' often looks to hire candidates who will fit in. Fitting in describes functioning and being regarded as functioning as a 'normal' constructive team member; that is, performing in an established way that meets the needs of what is wanted and expected of a team member in an existing company culture. If the normal is an all Canadian team and the goal is to continue with the same dynamic then hiring the candidate who fits in may work well for them.

But, if the goal is to engage with diversity to meet a more global future and benefit from the opportunities diversity can provide, then diverse candidates have opportunities to be hired. The good news is that with conscious effort diverse candidates can be hired. This guide looks at cultural based expectations and behavior in the interview topics, then raises awareness of Canadian expectations and presents ideas for developing navigational skills prior to, during and after the interview.

IS THERE A CANADIAN CULTURE?

Yes, there are basic ways of working in Canada. This project is placed in the English Canadian workplace culture based in Alberta. We have tried to accurately generalize the current workplace culture. Generalizations are meant to be guides and considered along with the context of specific work situations. We felt it important to include these Canadian workplace culture generalizations to create a reference point for looking at the cultural differences that may matter in cross cultural interviews. These are described in section IV.A.3. Understanding the Unwritten Rules.

A. USING THE JOB DESCRIPTION FOR NAVIGATING THE INTERVIEW

The first step in navigating the interview is to assess exactly what skills are being sought. From the initial stage of creating a job posting and defining the position, companies may already be embedding certain expectations into the process. It's helpful to look at this process a little more closely, to gain a better picture of what the position is, and what skills will most effectively fill it.

The following job posting was used as the basis for Navigating the Interview:⁶

⁶ LinkedIn. (2014). Job Description. Retrieved from ca.linkedin.com/jobs2/view/13441480

Project Manager
Location Alberta
Posted 12/2013
Category: Water

OVERVIEW

Our Environmental Services group is dedicated to managing local and global environmental issues professionally and proactively. We provide integrated, multidisciplinary services to identify and assess liabilities and risks, and to develop solutions to site management, remediation, and mitigation. Our diverse staff of professionals includes specialists in marine biology, wetland science, wildlife biology, soil science, fisheries biology, botany, hydrogeology, hydrology, water resources management, water resources engineering, forestry, habitat and ecosystem restoration, permitting, GIS, information management, environmental monitoring, in-situ/ex-situ remedial design and implementation, human health and ecological risk assessments, air quality permitting and reporting, pipeline compliance, stormwater permitting and planning, and audit support services. We are seeking exceptionally talented and enthusiastic individuals with a keen interest in the natural sciences to join our team and advance their career.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Serve as the lead in a variety of water resources projects including those related to FEMA, stormwater, stream restoration, water quality, water and wastewater, and watershed management. This person will mentor diverse entry level engineers, coordinate with engineering and GIS staff, perform engineering analyses and design, develop reports and presentations, meet financial performance goals on assigned projects, assist with market development locally and internationally, and handle multinational client relations.

QUALIFICATIONS

The candidate must have these basic qualifications/requirements:

- Bachelor of Science degree in Civil, Environmental, Water Resources, or Biological Resources Engineering
- Registered as a Professional Engineer – APEGA
- Minimum of eight (8) years of engineering experience including stormwater management analysis and design, hydrologic and hydraulic modeling and analyses, and geographic information systems (GIS) with at least 4 years as a Project Manager
- Capability of marketing and developing Water Resources department – local and distant
- Excellent communication and written skills – second language an asset

Preferred skills that will assist the candidate in succeeding in the role are:

- Master of Science in Civil, Environmental, Water Resources, or Biological Resources Engineering
- Experience with managing multiple projects and task orders simultaneously
- Experience in directing staff to perform aspects of carrying out the project
- Experience in managing and developing project budgets and billing projects
- Experience with proposal writing

PRACTICE 1

Use this practice to raise your awareness of the expectations in the interview and how you will communicate to accommodate them to achieve your goal in the interview.

If you know that:

Canada is a land of specialists

Then you can understand the unwritten rule that:

Companies want to know what specific skills you bring

Your informed action can be:

List the key words from the job posting included above

Your informed TASK can be to:

Using the key words from the job description above choose three of four items and specify how they tie into the way you will respond to questions you will be asked. For example:

1. Handle multinational client relations
2. Develop markets locally and internationally
3. Mentor entry level diverse professionals

Think about each item specifically and name the demonstration of behavior or communication that meets the expectation. For example in number 1, consider what skills and experience will meet the criteria of handling multinational clients. Think about your own talents at engaging distant client relations and list the leadership skills you want to demonstrate as an example to share about you as a leader in action. Continue with the other two key words in the same way.

Your second informed action can be to:

List the key words from a job posting you will interview for

Your second informed TASK can be:

Using the key words from the job description choose three of four items and specify how they tie into the way you will respond to questions you may be asked.

B. JOB POSTING KEYWORDS



JOB POSTING KEYWORDS PRACTICE

A grid of 20 colored rectangular boxes arranged in 5 rows and 4 columns. The colors of the boxes are as follows:

Row	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
1	Dark Red	Dark Red	Dark Red	Dark Red
2	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange
3	Grey	Yellow	Dark Red	Green
4	Red	Yellow	Dark Red	Yellow
5	Orange	Orange	Green	Grey
6	Purple	Red	Orange	Dark Red

PRACTICE 2

Use this practice to think intentionally about the key words you identified in the job ad. Identify the skills that you are strong in how and how they can be brought to the job.

If you learn that:

Canadians employers are looking for ways to make themselves equal opportunity employers

Then you can understand the unwritten rule that:

Companies want to build diverse teams

Your informed action can be:

Think about your responses to interview questions and how they align with an employer's stated expectations in the job description.

Your informed TASK can be to:

Using the key words you created out of the job description choose three of four items and list why you value them. For example you might choose

1. Handle multinational client relations
2. Develop markets locally and internationally
3. Mentor entry level diverse professionals

For example, in example 1 above, consider what you value about multinational client relationships at work (e.g. multi-lingual, flexible in problem solving, adaptable to new situations etc.). Plan a response that could specifically address the intercultural capacity you have, if you were asked the question, "How would you help our company handle our multinational client relations?"

C. WHAT VALUE CAN YOU OFFER AS AN IEP?

The workplace is becoming increasingly globalized and competitive, and communicating internationally is becoming more necessary⁷. Canadians employers are looking for ways to make themselves attractive employers.

Moreover, many employers are looking for employees who are culturally astute and able to thrive in a global world market, to help them to become more competitive.

Hiring an internationally education professional (IEP) offers benefits for companies seeking employees who:

- have the ability to understand different cultural contexts and viewpoints
- demonstrate respect for others
- have knowledge of specific cultures
- can help bring in new clients and access new markets
- work effectively within diverse teams
- support a good brand and reputation for their organization
- demonstrate strong communication skills
- show cultural sensitivity
- have international experience

⁷ British Council, (2012). Culture at work: the value of intercultural skills in the workplace. p.3

However, even though employers value intercultural skills, they do not often screen for them in the recruitment process. Because there are no formal assessments for intercultural skills by employers it is left up to job candidates to demonstrate these skills in the application and interview process.⁸

PRACTICE 3

Use this practice to think about your value to the company as an international candidate.

If you learn that:

Even though Canadian employers are becoming increasingly globalized, communicating internationally is becoming more commonplace and the company you apply to may value intercultural skills – they won't usually screen intentionally for them.

Then you can understand the unwritten rule that:

The onus is usually put on the candidate to demonstrate the value of their intercultural skills in an interview

Your informed action can be:

Choose at least one aspect of the interview for example Question 3, how to motivate team members, and watch that section of at least one IEP's interview and then review that section of Louise's interview.

Your informed TASK can be to:

Develop short narratives that could have been used to talk about specific intercultural skills and experience. Then think about how you could talk about the intercultural skills and experience you bring.

Go back to your key words and select three of the tasks listed there. For example you might choose:

1. Handle multinational client relations
2. Develop markets locally and internationally
3. Mentor entry level diverse professionals

Think about each item specifically. For example in number 1, consider how your international experience relates to handling multinational clients – and create a response that fits in with the Canadian company context. Include all the intercultural skills you bring that will enable you to get the job done for the company. Continue with the other key words. You need to provide responses that could clearly link to the job description and help the Canadian panel assess your intercultural capacity.

⁸ British Council, (2012). Culture at work: the value of intercultural skills in the workplace. p.14

D. BARRIERS TO OVERCOME IN GETTING HIRED AS AN IEP

Managers normally don't want to hire anyone that might create a headache, that is, who will require a lot of attention before they can get to work. Explicitly they want to hire someone who can provide solutions to problems. Implicitly they want someone who can fit in – someone who will give them what they want and expect in their company culture.

However, Canadian interviewers can't assume people from elsewhere hold similar values to them, or would if they were given the opportunity because from our own cultures we all hold our commonsense views – explicitly or implicitly about the way things are and the way things should be. Cultural elements consciously or unconsciously influence how we talk, think and act. These common ways of acting and communicating can lead to unity in commonality – a sense of belonging to community – but can also lead to the belief that that one's culture is the best (and even sometimes to thinking others should be marginalized).

To navigate the interview successfully often necessitates that the candidate understands fundamental Canadian workplace assumptions – the unwritten rules. In this project we looked – as Canadians – at the way we interview and created videos to simulate our interview process from four culturally diverse candidate's perspectives. In the video the Canadian candidate clearly fits in and the interview runs with ease. It is not the case for the international candidates.

In this guide we provide knowledge to assist you in becoming aware of the unwritten rules Canadians use and provide skill-building tasks to develop your ability to connect these needs with the culturally diverse skills you bring.

IV. NAVIGATING THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

A. PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW

1. CONSIDERING CULTURE SPECIFIC PERSPECTIVES

In the video interviews with Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs) the Canadian panel sometimes finds the candidates' communication styles, behaviours or answers confusing and not what they expect. The three IEP interviews raise awareness of the range of diversity that candidates from China (Mei Li), Jordan (Ahmed Hussein) and Great Britain (James Brooke) bring. Each interview moves through a similar interview process with the panel. A framework was included here to analyze the diversity of cultural perspectives. This Culture Type Framework⁹ enables users to become familiar with the specific culture diversity that shapes how each of the four candidates (including the Canadian) behave throughout the interview process.

The three ethnic cultures were chosen not only because they represent groups currently coming to Alberta but also because they represent diverse culture types that we can look at to consider differences that may matter in an interview. These differences are generalizations and are presented out of respect for understanding diverse perspectives. Gaining intercultural awareness can enable candidates to broaden their understanding of how culture influences communication and more effectively prepare for a Canadian interview.

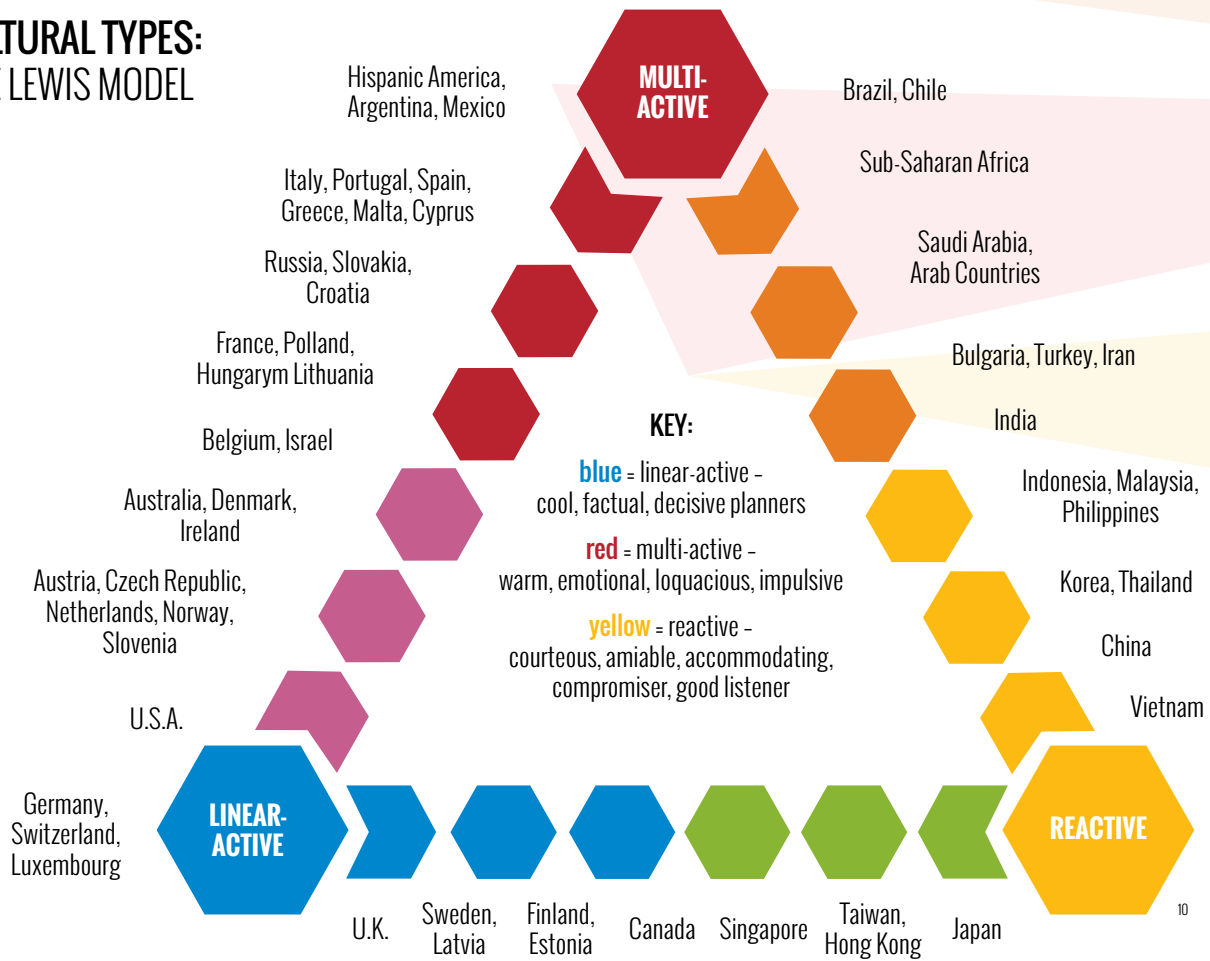
International candidates can't assume Canadians hold similar values to them, or would if given the opportunity. Our cultural upbringing informs our sense about the way things are and the way things should be. Cultural elements consciously or unconsciously influence how we talk, think and act. These common ways of acting and communicating can lead to a sense of belonging to community, but can also lead to the belief that one's culture is superior to others (and even sometimes to thinking others must be marginalized).

Successfully navigating a Canadian interview often first requires an awareness of your normal ways of responding in an interview. Once you bring these into your awareness you can compare them with the Canadian expectations to prepare for differences that may show up. You can prepare to build connections between your unique skills and the expectations of Canadian interviewer.

⁹ Hammerich, K., & Lewis, R.D., (2013). Fish Can't See Water: how national culture can make or break your corporate strategy. *United Kingdom: John Wiley & Sons* p.53

THIS FRAMEWORK PLACES CULTURES INTO A GLOBAL FRAME USING VARIATIONS OF 3 MAIN CULTURE TYPES: LINEAR-ACTIVE, MULTI-ACTIVE AND REACTIVE.

**CULTURAL TYPES:
THE LEWIS MODEL**

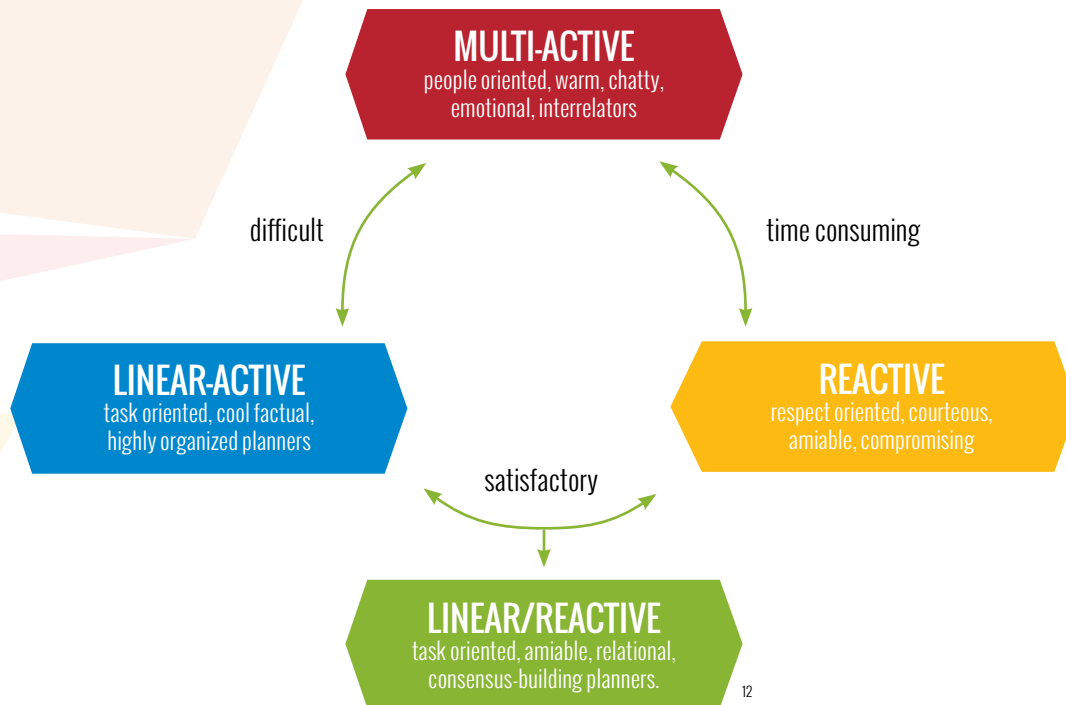


THIS FRAMEWORK NAMES DIFFERENCES THAT MAY MATTER IN TEAMWORK.

Linear active	Multi-active	Reactive
Talks half of the time Does one thing at the time Plans ahead step by step Polite but direct Confronts with logic Job-oriented Sticks to the facts Result-oriented Sticks to the agenda Written word important Restrained body language	Talks most of the time Does several things at once Plans grand outline only Emotional Confronts emotionally People-oriented Feelings before facts Relationship-oriented Roams back and forth Spoken word important Unrestrained body language	Listens most of the time Reacts to partner's action Looks at general principles Polite, indirect Never confronts Very people-oriented Statements are promises Harmony-oriented Often asks for "repeats" Face-to-face contact important Subtle body language ¹¹

¹⁰ Lewis, R.D., (2013). Language, communication, culture. Retrieved May, 2014 from <http://www.riversdown.com/cross-culture/the-lewis-model/>

¹¹ Lewis, R.D., (2013). Language, communication, culture.



This Culture Type Framework enables users to become aware of the cultural diversity in the four cultures (representing three larger culture categories and the hybrid Canadian culture) that appear in the video. It provides information for analyzing diversity from culturally informed perspectives to help candidates engage with some of the differences that matter in Canadian interviews.

Preparing in advance:

1. Watch the videos, noting the differences that create confusion in the interview
2. Use the information in the frameworks to gain understanding of these differences
3. Consider your own culture, where you are placed in the Lewis frame and how it will influence how you engage with the interviewers and answer their questions

¹² Hammerich, K., & Lewis, R.D., (2013). Fish Can't See Water: how national culture can make or break your corporate strategy. United Kingdom: John Wiley & Sons p.53

James Linear active	Ahmed Multi-active	Mei Reactive	Canadian Panel Linear/Reactive
Individualist sees self as: honest, reasonable, caring, considerate, academic, traditional, diplomatic	Familial sees self as: moral, kind, compassionate, respectful, sincere, true, eloquent, assertive, confident	Collective sees self as: courteous, modest, thrifty, patient, respectful, sincere, loyal, stoic, generous, adaptable, undemanding impartial	Individualist sees self as: honest, friendly, easy-going, tolerant, considerate, sincere, respectful, adaptable
Who is: strong in adversity with insular habits and traditions	Who is: private about family life	Who is: A risk taker, bottom-line focused, organized	Who is: fair, generous, independent, uncomplicated, internationally impartial ¹ , not politically driven
Who values: pragmatic solutions and incremental changes, respecting privacy for self and others, freedom to do what they please as long as their actions don't negatively impact others.	Who values: human relations and socializing, giving and expecting favors	Who values: high context, group oriented automatic chain of command, collective decision making	Who values: multi-culturalism, equality, individualism
Who believes: open debate is okay	Who believes: pride must be supported and respected; extended family increase obligations to others	Who believes: fulfillment of obligations to group is 'correct' way	Who believes: planning ahead, using information from facts and consensus building are important for decision making
Who uses: a form of vagueness to stall, confuse or delay business	Who uses: stories and emotions	Who uses: deference to relate to hierarchy	Who uses: consensus for relationship building
Who may: be cool, decisive, disagree, praise obliquely using understatement, irony	Who may: be sensitive to non-verbal cues; focus on immediate needs	Who may: focus on listening and accommodating	Who may: focus on personal strengths and team building
Who may not: want to be taken too literally	Who may not: be punctual; listen for too long	Who may not: want to speak about personal strengths	Who may dislike: wasting time, boasting, showiness or too many status symbols
Nonverbal communication: calm, rational, factual, eye contact but brief	Nonverbal communication: uninhibited, vigorous, dramatic, uses eyes to reinforce message	Nonverbal communication: silence, listening, avoid eye contact minimal body language, moderate	Nonverbal communication: calm, friendly, smiling minimal protocol eye contact brief

2. ANALYZING CULTURAL SPECIFIC INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW PROCESS

INTERVIEW PROCESS

FIRST IMPRESSIONS:

- Greeting
- Introductions
- Small talk
- Transition to formal interview

QUESTION 1:

Tell us now; what motivates you to work for our company?

QUESTION 2:

And what interests you in this position as a Senior Project Team Leader in our Environmental Services? How does it align with your career goals?

QUESTION 3:

Describe a time recently where you motivated your team members to complete a project on time and on budget? What approach did you use?

QUESTION 4:

Now will you give us an example of a recent time when you managed a conflict between team members? What did you do? What was the outcome?

QUESTION 5:

Could you tell us what makes you a good candidate for this position?

QUESTION 6:

We've asked you a lot of questions. What question do you have for us?

FINAL IMPRESSIONS:

- Closing the interview
- Departing

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: GREETING AND INTRODUCTIONS

Linear active English James	Multi-active Jordanian Ahmed	Reactive Chinese Mei Li	Linear/Reactive Canadian Louise
Task-oriented, cool, factual, organized, planners, punctual, family names to begin, formal, humor is important in business with jokes and anecdotes which they expect others to match, understatement, irony or sarcasm to disagree, oblique and hard to understand	People-oriented, warm, emotional inter-relaters, punctual not hurried, mentions colleague or connections, places importance on status, art of communication, theatrical, elaborate, men may not be comfortable shaking hands with women	Respect-oriented, courteous, amiable compromiser, punctual, economize on other's time –humility combined with need to consider transaction and build relationship; Formal, respectful in speech and action, senior manager is shown most respect, dislikes arrogance	Task-oriented, amiable, relational planners, punctual, first names, more formal in the interview than in general workplace, friendly, equality, rapport building, dislike arrogance – or lots of talk about self, multi-cultural history has effect on language – plain and simple is okay
Handshake: distance maintained and short clasp	Handshake: close, sustained clasp	Handshake: may not be expected in greeting, distance maintained	Handshake: distance 1.3 m one pump and release, firm
Nonverbal style: maintains formality, sits upright	Nonverbal style: not rushed, obvious use of body language, eyes held on eyes	Nonverbal style: minimal body language, neutral expression is polite, leans forward, formal	Nonverbal style: ready smile, acknowledge others, relaxed sitting, legs crossed leaning back

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: SMALL TALK

Linear active English James	Multi-active Jordanian Ahmed	Reactive Chinese Mei Li	Linear/Reactive Canadian Panel & Louise
Reasonable, diplomatic, dry humor, cool approach, business is felt serious but appears casual, talks about family, vacations, memories Use of tag, “isn’t it?” expects confirmation, linguistic capability obvious and joint understanding is assumed	Builds relationship first, more personal, friendly, loves to talk, compassionate, enthusiastic, uncomfortable with formality and stiffness, extends invitations openly, appears comfortable and ready to chat	Enters into small talk uneasily, unsure what it's about, might take it 'sideways' (i.e. circular or cyclic -not point for point – not linear, might use to launch into little story relating to earlier point and/or arriving at a new point of interest) contemplation of whole	Keeps it simple as it's a warm up – building rapport, Looks for places to agree Agreement is requested in use of tag “eh” (and need the other to just agree), Calm low key humour, Indirect to avoid conflict and needs to make the other feel comfortable, conversation moves back and forth- short and lively linear turn-taking; First impressions are very important and lasting, Friendly doesn't mean being a friend at work

QUESTION 1: WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO WORK FOR OUR COMPANY?

Linear active English James	Multi-active Jordanian Ahmed	Reactive Chinese Mei Li	Linear/Reactive Canadian Panel & Louise
<p>Traditionally motivated by achievement not words; work value equated to success in position & salary; through globalization taking opportunities to apply western management styles in business contexts elsewhere in the world (corporate colonialism); access to technology and money for research; opportunities for advancement without bureaucratic controls¹³</p>	<p>Traditionally motivated by words more than deeds – by emotion, compassion, expressions of human understanding; compromise between materialistic goals and softer human values; gains inspiration from people or situations that boost their self-confidence; nurture and security¹⁴</p>	<p>Traditionally motivated by reassuring comfort of collective goals and actions; common loyalty; discovery of enduring trust and unswerving diligence; preserving integrity and face for family, friends, colleagues¹⁵</p>	<p>Motivation from hard work determining personal value; usually comparatively laid back, give people what they want and expect; avoid conflict and problems; collective compromise; passion for career</p>
<p>Reference best schools and family ties Medium trust on first meeting</p>	<p>Reference family ties; passion, idealism, love of work In business limited trust based on mutual dependence; no assumption about goodwill (complete trust in family and close friends)</p>	<p>Reference education and experience but won't use I – centered focus – uses we Low trust – initially, flexible with laws and rules</p>	<p>Reference time line in evidence of experience; Medium trust at first builds through jobs well done, rules followed</p>

¹³ Lewis, R.D., (2005). When cultures collide: Leading across cultures. p.194-200

¹⁴ Lewis, R.D., (2005). When cultures collide: Leading across cultures. p.408-412

¹⁵ Lewis, R.D., (2005). When cultures collide: Leading across cultures. p.480-501

QUESTION 2: WHAT INTERESTS YOU IN THIS POSITION AS A SENIOR PROJECT TEAM LEADER IN OUR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES? HOW DOES IT ALIGN WITH YOUR CAREER GOALS?

Linear active English James	Multi-active Jordanian Ahmed	Reactive Chinese Mei Li	Linear/Reactive Canadian Panel & Louise
<p>Personal strengths: consultative, cross-cultural skills; dry humour, appear casual but feel business is serious matter, competitive but not ruthless – aspire to fair play, and being under control – “keep it nice”</p>	<p>Personal strengths: warmth, excitement, enthusiasm, passion, sympathetic, active, emotional, eloquent, inventive, sensitive with dignity and honor, ‘pundonor’ (Spanish for point of honour), macho</p>	<p>Personal strengths: technical knowledge, practical personal experience with inclination to fix things, harmonious team – work on problem together, work hard, value education, negotiating skills, inventive, patient, courteous</p>	<p>Personal strengths: cultural sensitivity, tolerance, reliable, give and take, compromise, build consensus, trustworthy, tries to be part of the team</p>
<p>Leadership: Managers want to be considered one of the team but maintain slight power distance, give orders as suggestions or hints (e.g. perhaps we might try this), like to debate; veneer of casual refinement and sophistication but also hard pragmatism, uses humor, like to be reasonable and show common sense, rarely disagree openly with proposals, doesn’t make decisions quickly</p>	<p>Leadership: Authority centered around CEO, (women sometimes excluded), autocratic, uses passionate presence as a way to inspire others, persuade, share how they feel, extraverted, complete human transactions emotionally, assign time it may take to develop networking, will work to gain trust and rapport with team</p>	<p>Leadership: Doesn’t give orders just indirectly gives opinion leading to support and compliance; display modesty and courtesy despite accepted seniority, create harmonious attitude for teamwork, subtle body language acts for words, know their companies well, paternalistic, ideas often initiate from shop floor and move up, will ask team members how they feel about important matters, won’t devalue other’s opinions, will give feedback indirectly</p>	<p>Leadership: Lead from the front by example, impartial, low key, truthful, trusting, egalitarian, unhurried decisions followed by rapid action, build confidence in team members</p>

QUESTION 3: DESCRIBE A TIME RECENTLY WHERE YOU MOTIVATED YOUR TEAM MEMBERS TO COMPLETE A PROJECT ON TIME AND ON BUDGET? WHAT APPROACH DID YOU USE?

Linear active English James	Multi-active Jordanian Ahmed	Reactive Chinese Mei Li	Linear/Reactive Canadian Panel & Louise
Efficiency: task orientation	Efficiency: relationship orientation, tasks dictated from above, strategies and success depend on connections, and knowing right people	Efficiency: people oriented and dominate with knowledge, patience and quiet control, in China's past hierarchy led to harmony based on strict ethical rules	Efficiency: results oriented, common sense approach vs. aggressive methods based on feasibility and profit
Time: is linear – the past is completed, allocate the present to complete planned goals and the future is predicted through planning, forecasts ¹⁶ , plan by schedules, forecasts, targets, deadlines, passing time without decisions is wasted time	Time: is a subjective commodity needed to build relationships-business and close relations are important, plan is often outline and vague to begin with	Time: is cyclic not a scarce commodity, past leads to context similar to now, future is not managed but harmonized, plan for regularity – think long term; will thank others for their valuable time – but will use time to repeat details of contract and to nurture relationship and build common trust for future intent	Time: is linear, plan, compartmentalize, set expectations, forecast, and strive to reach targets (can reconcile to multi-active use)
Motivation: from increased opportunities for individual success, hard work should earn success and prosperity; access to high-level technology and funding for research	Motivation: from words more than deeds; by emotion, compassion to boost confidence; nurture security and understanding, compromise between materialistic goals and softer human values	Motivation: from comfort of collective goals and action; common loyalty to respectable organizations; lasting trust, preserving integrity and face of family, friends and coworkers; increased leisure time	Motivation: hard work determines your value; usually comparatively laid back, give people what they want and expect, avoid conflict and problems; use collective compromise
Status: still some aristocracy, pedigree of family name	Status: autocratic and charismatic, authority around CEO, knowing the right people, work from intuition	Status: membership in group, hierarchical father to son, ruler to subject, senior friend to junior friend leads to harmony and ethical rule	Status: meritocracy is valued but privilege of position is still present
Information: is key to negotiating, use of data as bases to obtain facts, use official channels e.g. chamber of commerce, info sheets	Information: is key to knowing what is coming and is sought from contacts, coffee shop and press	Information: comes from many sources, listen well and have considerate dialogues, use high technological skills to source info	Information: respect individual privacy, rely on use of data and dialogue to determine information needed to act

¹⁶ Lewis, R.D., (2005). When cultures collide: Leading across cultures. p.53

QUESTION 4: WILL YOU GIVE US AN EXAMPLE OF A RECENT TIME WHEN YOU MANAGED A CONFLICT BETWEEN TEAM MEMBERS? WHAT DID YOU DO? WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME? WOULD YOU DO ANYTHING DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME?

Linear active English James	Multi-active Jordanian Ahmed	Reactive Chinese Mei Li	Linear/Reactive Canadian Panel & Louise
Idea or policy backed by facts and figures must be accepted	Idea from people they like paves way	Idea from people they trust paves way	Idea socialized and backed by facts and figures will 'go'
Trust based on performance, consistency, scientific truth, efficient officials, impersonal low-context focus on tasks, progress builds trust, speak little but give explicit instruction, explain, clarify	Trust based on compassion, closeness, refusal to gain from other's weakness high-context engagement with trust before getting to task (speak more – most of message is in person)	Trust based on protecting other's face, courtesy, sacrifice, reciprocal attention, speak less, listen more, leave a lot unsaid – pay colleague compliment of assuming they know situation	Trust based on transparency, follow the rules, word-deed correlation, fairly impersonal focus on task – get moving and build trust through job done well and completed on time
Conflict and confrontation disharmony can yield creativity	Conflict and confrontation avoid discussing unpleasant matters, use of euphemisms to downplay unpleasant news, if conflict cannot be avoided will engage in confrontation with high emotional expression and volume	Conflict and confrontation avoided through harmony and consensus, success in business deals is goal but patience to achieve in right time and manner is way – long term orientation and goals, authority is not passed down from leaders	Conflict and confrontation harmonious team is productive, focus on consensus building

QUESTION 5: COULD YOU TELL US WHAT MAKES YOU A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR THIS POSITION?

Linear active English James	Multi-active Jordanian Ahmed	Reactive Chinese Mei Li	Linear/Reactive Canadian Panel & Louise
Personal focus on individual – what's in it for me, express personal worth e.g. own value as team player and strong individual leader	Emphasizes technical expertise, innovation, is eloquent on leadership abilities and the future value of contribution to the company	Loyal, build strong group, build good company, work hard, in for long term	Continuous learning, personal focus, upwardly mobile, ask about future opportunities for self

QUESTION 6: WE’VE ASKED YOU A LOT OF QUESTIONS. WHAT QUESTION DO YOU HAVE FOR US?

Linear active English James	Multi-active Jordanian Ahmed	Reactive Chinese Mei Li	Linear/Reactive Canadian Panel & Louise
Personal focus on individual – opportunities for advancement, confirmation of worth and status, asks when can expect to hear a decision as an expression of desire to predict future events	Focus on how company will provide rewards for personal contribution	Focus on knowing more about the team (how many people)	Interest in experience of panel members in how work is fulfilling as way to understand positive aspects of the company and what motivates the people in the company to work there, asks when can expect to hear a decision as expression of desire to predict future events

FINAL IMPRESSIONS: CLOSING THE INTERVIEW AND SAYING GOODBYE

Linear active English James	Multi-active Jordanian Ahmed	Reactive Chinese Mei Li	Linear/Reactive Canadian Panel & Louise
Personal, short, cool goodbyes to each panel member, cordial tone, uses formal names for panel members with higher status	Warm personal goodbyes, focus on personal network as a way to build relationship and to demonstrate value of his social capital	Thanks each person formally for interview with focus on respect and appreciation	Warm, short, personal goodbyes to each panel member, informal tone

PRACTICE 4

If you can identify:

Different perspectives and understand another person’s expectations by observing their behaviors, for example how panel members look and communicate when demonstrating their expectations, you can better understand how to fit effectively into the job.

When you are openly curious and attentive to the unwritten rules that guide the panel.

Then you can:

Adapt how you answer interview questions to more effectively establish your strengths, abilities and characteristics.

Your informed action can be:

To relate specifically what you bring to what the panel is expecting.

Your informed TASK can be to:

Watch one or more of the interview videos and complete the following tasks:

Identify how the candidate demonstrates some of the following Canadian Workplace Values – the characteristics that are often sought in Canadian interviews. Watch for how the candidate demonstrates these values. Would this way of demonstrating these values fit in your responses?

- building rapport – a sense of connection and camaraderie, relationship with colleagues
- building trust – reliance on the integrity, ability or character of a person
- building credibility – inspiring belief in one’s capacity and abilities
- gaining respect – being highly regarded as a colleague
- taking initiative – start actions using inventiveness and creativity
- delegating responsibilities – allocation of tasks and people
- demonstrating accountability – acceptance of responsibility for one’s actions
- using critical thinking – clear, rational, open-minded and informed by evidence
- giving/receiving feedback – exchange of evaluative information about behavior, events, processes, attitude, knowledge and/or skills
- acting with professionalism – understanding values and operating principles of organization – using the standing practice or methods

3. UNDERSTANDING UNWRITTEN RULES

In interviews, expected behavior is usually understood implicitly but seldom explained explicitly. This section provides material for candidates to stretch beyond thinking of the interview process as a mystery. For example, watching the ‘Job Interview Louise Michaud’ (the Canadian candidate) will raise awareness of how Canadians communicate in an interview. When Canadians interview Canadians they usually don’t need to negotiate meaning and can operate unconscious of its influence; however when they interview diverse candidates this changes.

Using the videos and the guide may lead to greater understanding of what it is Canadians do and expect from their perspectives. This look at Canadians allows candidates to become more able to name the expectations Canadians have in the questions we ask and the answers we expect. A framework was designed to follow the interview process and used with the script will identify what it does, what it looks like and the Canadian fit, check list and assessment. This analysis, frames the entire interview process. Gaining cultural awareness of what Canadians bring to an interview enables candidates to understand the unwritten rules of the Canadian job interview and prepares them to align their strengths in ways that may be better understood by interviewers.

4. ANALYZING CANADIAN INTERVIEWS



INTERVIEW PROCESS

FIRST IMPRESSIONS:

- Greeting
- Introductions
- Small talk
- Transition to formal interview

QUESTION 1:

Tell us now; what motivates you to work for our company?

QUESTION 2:

And what interests you in this position as a Senior Project Team Leader in our Environmental Services? How does it align with your career goals?

QUESTION 3:

Describe a time recently where you motivated your team members to complete a project on time and on budget? What approach did you use?

QUESTION 4:

Now will you give us an example of a recent time when you managed a conflict between team members? What did you do? What was the outcome?

QUESTION 5:

Could you tell us what makes you a good candidate for this position?

QUESTION 6:

We've asked you a lot of questions. What question do you have for us?

FINAL IMPRESSIONS:

- Closing the interview
- Departing

CANADIAN CANDIDATE LOUISE MICHAUD'S INTERVIEW

INTERVIEW PROCESS FIRST IMPRESSIONS: GREETING AND INTRODUCTIONS

SCRIPT	
PANEL	CANDIDATE
Sashi (<i>opening the door and smiling</i>): Good afternoon, Louise. Come on in.	Louise : Hi, Sashi. Thanks for asking me back.
Sashi : Thank you for coming in. Sashi (<i>gesturing towards Bob</i>): Louise, I'd like you to meet Bob Johnson, our manager of environmental projects...	
Bob (<i>extending his hand</i>): Hello Louise, how are you?	Louise (<i>firmly shaking Bob's hand</i>): Fine, thanks, nice to meet you.
Sashi (<i>gesturing towards Joseph</i>): And this is Joseph Cardinal, our compliance manager...	
Joseph (<i>smiling and gesturing</i>): Welcome – I have a cold, so excuse me if I don't shake your hand.	Louise (<i>smiling at Joseph</i>): It's that time of year, I guess. I've been lucky so far.
Sashi (<i>putting her hands on the back of the Candidate Chair</i>): So Louise, please have a seat, make yourself comfortable... Can I get you something to drink? We have coffee, tea, and water...	Louise (<i>sitting down</i>): A glass of water would be great, thanks.
Sashi : You've got it.	

WHAT IT DOES	CANADIAN FIT
Greet candidate Make introductions Shake hands Settle into the Space	Formal Greeting but Relational Hi, Sashi. Thanks for asking me back.. Hand shake (<i>firmly shaking Bob's hand</i>) : Fine, thanks, nice to meet you.
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	No hand shake (concern for maintaining public health by minimizing physical contact when someone is ill) Louise (<i>smiling at Joseph</i>) : It's that time of year, I guess. I've been lucky so far. Keep brief and move on to task (<i>sitting down</i>) : A glass of water would be great, thanks.
Fairly formal – more than office norm Brief and structured but relational Prepare quickly to move into small talk	

CANADIAN CHECK LIST

- ✓ shakes hands firmly and briefly
- ✓ uses brief eye contact
- ✓ doesn't talk too personally
- ✓ shows interest and enthusiasm
- ✓ perception is not arrogant or over confident or superior: i.e. respect shown for status quo
- ✓ sense of equality among participants

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) **1 2 3 4 5**

- ___ Responds appropriately to greeting and introduction
- ___ Brings enthusiasm, readiness
- ___ Understands formality of interview process

INTERVIEW PROCESS FIRST IMPRESSIONS: SMALL TALK

SCRIPT:	
PANEL	CANDIDATE
<i>(Sashi hands Louise a glass of water.)</i>	Louise: Thank you. <i>(Takes a sip)</i> I went for a short run this morning and should have had more to drink.
Joseph: So you're a runner are you?	Louise: Nothing too serious – 4 or 5 times a week – and during the summer I like to sign up for some of the local 10 ks.
<p>Joseph: I was on the track team in high school and university – middle distance runner.</p> <p>Bob <i>(looking at Joseph):</i> Something else I didn't know about you. I'm impressed.</p> <p>Sashi: I stick to yoga – it's calming</p>	Louise: Oh yeah, I've been meaning to add that into my workout.
<p>Bob: And on that note, why don't we work our way into the first question?</p> <p>Sashi: Sure, good idea, Bob. Louise, we're going to ask you some questions, and when we're finished you'll have an opportunity to ask your own.</p> <p>Bob, why don't you start?</p>	
Bob: Okay, ready Louise?	Louise: Absolutely

WHAT IT DOES	CANADIAN FIT
Soften directness Build comfort for interview Build rapport Create opportunities to agree Establish turn-taking Establish personal distance Create casual beginning Transition quickly into task Separate social/professional	<p>Build rapport Thank you. <i>(Takes a sip)</i> I went for a short run this morning and should have had more to drink.</p> <p>Establish turn-taking Nothing too serious – 4 or 5 times a week – and during the summer I like to sign up for some of the local 10 ks.</p> <p>Create opportunities to agree Oh yeah, I've been meaning to add that in to my workout.</p>
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	<p>Keep brief and move on to task And on that note, why don't we work our way into the first question?</p> <p>Engaged and enthusiastic Absolutely.</p>
Keep simple as warm up to an interview Mode of polite informal conversation Basic, generic, without depth Non-confrontational and non-threatening Modest-down to earth Engaged and enthusiastic Take turns – don't interrupt each other – Keep brief and move on to task	

CANADIAN CHECK LIST

- ✓ talks about weather, traffic, parking, sports standings, movies, exercise, holiday
- ✓ agrees on common points
- ✓ looks for points to connect on
- ✓ uses brief eye contact
- ✓ keeps it simple and light
- ✓ doesn't launch into a story
- ✓ doesn't talk too personally
- ✓ shows interest and enthusiasm
- ✓ sits semi-relaxed: i.e. legs crossed leaning back a little
- ✓ perception is not arrogant, over confident, superior: i.e. respect for status quo, not too loud, doesn't hold the stage or talk too much about self, listens as much as talks

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) **1 2 3 4 5**

___ Responds appropriately to small talk

___ Adds to the conversation effectively and appropriately

___ Builds rapport

SAFE TOPICS FOR CANADIAN SMALL TALK

traffic, pets, children, workload, milestone events (e.g. weddings, anniversaries), something new (e.g. glasses, hair cut), weather, holidays, sports, movies, hobbies

UNSAFE TOPICS FOR CANADIAN SMALL TALK

religion, sexual orientation, negative news stories or jokes about a group in society, mental illness, other people's appearance, salary, critical comments on a co-workers performance

INTERVIEW PROCESS FIRST IMPRESSIONS: TRANSITION TO FORMAL INTERVIEW

SCRIPT:

PANEL	CANDIDATE
Bob: And on that note, why don't we work our way into the first question?	
Sashi: Sure, good idea, Bob. Louise, we're going to ask you some questions, and when we're finished you'll have an opportunity to ask your own. Bob, why don't you start?	
Bob: Okay, ready Louise?	Louise: Absolutely

WHAT IT DOES

Separate social and professional talk
Brief explanation of interview process
Prepare for first interview question

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Describe formal interview process
Explain panel will question first and then candidate can ask a question
Keep brief and move on to first question

CANADIAN FIT

nonverbal
actively listens to process

nonverbal
recognizes shift in interview from informal to formal questions and answers

nonverbal
answer shows interest and enthusiasm to proceed
i.e. assured and ready

absolutely
Non-verbally express interest and enthusiasm
Louise is alert and leaning into conversation

CANADIAN CHECK LIST

- ✓ actively follows process
- ✓ recognizes shift in procedure from small talk to formal interview questions
- ✓ uses brief eye contact to all interviewers
- ✓ shows interest and enthusiasm
- ✓ sits semi-relaxed: i.e. legs crossed leaning back a little
- ✓ shows confidence and readiness for interview questions to begin

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) **1 2 3 4 5**

- ___ shifts from informal small talk to formal Q and A
- ___ answers enthusiastically and confidently to proceed
- ___ nonverbally demonstrates enthusiasm and interest
- ___ nonverbally demonstrates confidence

INTERVIEW PROCESS QUESTION 1: WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO WORK FOR OUR COMPANY?

SCRIPT:

PANEL	CANDIDATE
<p>Bob: Tell us now; what motivates you to work for our company?</p>	<p>Louise: What you're doing here is solid, really impressive. Especially the work on removing liabilities and environmental risk reduction – you're really considering all the options. It's truly exciting – and forward thinking. I'd like to contribute from my background in water resources management.</p>

WHAT IT DOES

Elicit candidate's reason to apply for this specific job

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Show interest in profession and field of work

Respond with specific example: use low context examples or specifics to create meaning

Demonstrate initiative: as inventive, creative, resourceful

Demonstrate goal oriented: state goals and visions and example of works hard to achieve them

Build rapport: give example of connection with work/team

Create credibility: validate personal fit for team and company as believable authority

CANADIAN FIT

Show interest in this job
What you're doing here is solid, really impressive

Show interest in profession
It's truly exciting – and forward thinking

Use specifics
Especially the work on removing liabilities and environmental risk reduction

Demonstrate initiative
I'd like to contribute from my background

Demonstrate goal oriented
I'd like to contribute from my background

Build rapport
You're really considering all the options

Create credibility
I'd like to contribute from my background in water resources management

CANADIAN CHECK LIST

- ✓ Shows interest in this job
- ✓ Shows interest in profession
- ✓ Responds with specific example supporting leadership abilities
- ✓ Demonstrates initiative supporting leadership abilities
- ✓ Demonstrates goal oriented supporting leadership abilities
- ✓ Builds rapport supporting leadership abilities
- ✓ Creates credibility supporting leadership abilities

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) **1 2 3 4 5**

- ___ names understanding of position
- ___ names personal interest in profession and position
- ___ uses specifics to create understanding
- ___ demonstrates personal initiative
- ___ demonstrates personal goal oriented leadership
- ___ demonstrates well organized thoughts

INTERVIEW PROCESS QUESTION 2: WHAT INTERESTS YOU IN THIS POSITION AS A SENIOR PROJECT TEAM LEADER IN OUR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES? HOW DOES IT ALIGN WITH YOUR CAREER GOALS?

SCRIPT:	
PANEL	CANDIDATE
<p>Bob: And what interests you in this position as a Senior Project Team Leader in our Environmental Services? How does it align with your career goals?</p>	<p>Louise: I've been building leadership skills in every job I've had since graduating from university, but I feel now is the time to focus on using these skills towards more long-term goals. I think I've learned how to build confidence in a team, how to lead them to consensus. I'm especially good at managing long-term goals – you know, setting expectations, achieving results. I am good leading a team to bring consensus while achieving results. And I'm really attracted to working on multiple projects. From what I know of your company you're involved in lots of interesting and challenging ones, and you're on the leading edge of balancing development with environmental concerns.</p>

WHAT IT DOES	CANADIAN FIT
<p>Elicit candidate's understanding of leadership and its relationship to career goals, upward mobility, professional growth</p> <p>Elicit how candidate will align career goals with company goals</p>	<p>Demonstrates active listening Uses brief eye contact, nods and responds with facial expressions, leans in towards speaker slightly</p> <p>Validates leadership experience I've been building leadership skills in every job I've had since graduating from university</p>
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	
<p>Establish personal leadership aptitudes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity and conciseness • active listening skills • consensus building • results oriented • planning and informing team • validates controlling multiple projects • ready for challenges <p>Show personal drive</p> <p>Demonstrate alignment with company goals</p> <p>Tie aptitudes to personal experience</p>	<p>Names personal leadership aptitude I think I've learned how to build confidence in a team, how to lead them to consensus. I am good leading a team to bring consensus while achieving results</p> <p>Names understanding of leadership goals I'm especially good at managing long-term goals – you know, setting expectations, achieving results... And I'm really attracted to working on multiple projects.</p> <p>Describes personal career goals I feel now is the time to focus on using these skills towards more long-term goals.</p> <p>Demonstrates alignment with company goals From what I know of your company you're involved in lots of interesting and challenging ones, and you're on the leading edge of balancing development with environmental concerns</p>

CANADIAN CHECK LIST

- ✓ Demonstrates fluent language use
- ✓ Uses well organized thoughts
- ✓ Demonstrates active listening
- ✓ Validates leadership experience
- ✓ Names personal leadership aptitude
- ✓ Names understanding of leadership goals
- ✓ Describes personal career goals
- ✓ Demonstrates alignment with company goals

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) **1 2 3 4 5**

- ___ names personal leadership aptitude and competence strengths and goals
- ___ demonstrates understanding of competency for leading a team
- ___ demonstrates clarity and conciseness requirements for leadership
- ___ aligns with company values

INTERVIEW PROCESS QUESTION 3: DESCRIBE A TIME RECENTLY WHERE YOU MOTIVATED YOUR TEAM MEMBERS TO COMPLETE A PROJECT ON TIME AND ON BUDGET? WHAT APPROACH DID YOU USE?

SCRIPT:	
PANEL	CANDIDATE
<p>Joseph: Describe a time recently where you motivated your team members to complete a project on time and on budget? What approach did you use?</p>	<p>Louise: Interesting you should ask that. Due to the early freeze-up this year, we had to change gears in our project. Losing time meant losing money, and as it was, we were already on a tight schedule. So I decided it was time to be proactive. I called the team together, reviewed the data with them, in a very short time we managed to reshape our priorities and reallocate our resources. With hard work, counting on everyone on the team, the project was back on track within five weeks. We completed it just last month – bang-on budget and only six days past the initial time estimate – all to the client’s satisfaction. I was very proud of our team’s achievement.</p>

WHAT IT DOES	CANADIAN FIT
<p>Elicit specific information about the candidate’s personal strengths, as a leader, and his/her understanding of how team needs relate to motivation</p> <p>Elicit candidate’s competence to keep projects on time and budget</p>	<p>Soft skills in motivation: With hard work, counting on everyone on the team</p> <p>Cope with complicated tasks: Due to the early freeze-up this year, we had to change gears in our project. Losing time meant losing money, and as it was, we were already on a tight schedule So I decided it was time to be proactive</p> <p>Build rapport With hard work, counting on everyone on the team...</p> <p>Recognize contributions of team I was very proud of our team’s achievement</p>
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	
<p>Describe personal leadership skills relating to motivating a team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable • Unhurried decision making followed by rapid action • Lead from the front – being impartial, low-key, truthful, and egalitarian • Encourage tolerance and cultural sensitivity • Manage complicated tasks • Confidence in technical ability • Need to satisfy client’s needs <p>Demonstrate personal ability to motivate team members to contribute to tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of soft skills • Act on team member’s recommendations • Make compromises • Reach consensus • Expect compliance • Build rapport i.e. connection with work/team • Recognize contributions – opportunities for individuals to shine 	

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE *(Continued)*

Demonstrate understanding of importance of keeping tasks on time and on budget: i.e. result oriented

- Through use of time lines—set expectations, forecast and reach targets
- Result oriented
- Give access to high level technology

Create credibility in interview

- Respond to question with specific example
- Validate personal fit for team and company as believable authority

CANADIAN FIT *(Continued)*

Approach to team work is linear – using agendas and forums

I called the team together, reviewed the data with them, in a very short time we managed to reshape our priorities and reallocate our resources.

Work is results oriented

through use of time lines to set expectations, forecast and reach targets

Demonstrates technical skills in keeping tasks on time and budget

We completed it just last month – bang-on budget and only six days past the initial time estimate

Understands the need to satisfy clients

all to the client's satisfaction

Skills in keeping tasks on time and budget

We completed it just last month – bang-on budget and only six days past the initial time estimate – all to the client's satisfaction

Create credibility in interview with specific example

Due to the early freeze-up this year, we had to change gears in our project.

Validate personal fit

Losing time meant losing money, and as it was, we were already on a tight schedule. So I decided it was time to be proactive.

CANADIAN CHECK LIST

- ✓ Demonstrates use of soft skills in motivation
- ✓ Copes with complicated tasks
- ✓ Builds rapport
- ✓ Recognizes contributions of team
- ✓ Demonstrates technical skills in keeping tasks on time and budget
- ✓ Understands the need to satisfy clients
- ✓ Applies a linear approach – using agendas and forums
- ✓ Results oriented
- ✓ Keeps projects on time and on task
- ✓ Creates credibility in interview

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) **1 2 3 4 5**

- ___ demonstrates understanding of motivating a team
- ___ clarifies personal strengths to motivate team to focus on and complete tasks
- ___ demonstrates alignment with importance of keeping tasks on time and on budget: results oriented
- ___ demonstrates relationship of team motivation to agency
- ___ validates relationship of team motivation with goal of client satisfaction

INTERVIEW PROCESS QUESTION 4: WILL YOU GIVE US AN EXAMPLE OF A RECENT TIME WHEN YOU MANAGED A CONFLICT BETWEEN TEAM MEMBERS? WHAT DID YOU DO? WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME? WOULD YOU DO ANYTHING DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME?

SCRIPT:	
PANEL	CANDIDATE
<p>Bob: Will you give us an example of a recent time when you managed a conflict between team members? What did you do? What was the outcome? Would you do anything differently next time?</p>	<p>Louise: This was with the same team. I'm sure I can outline the general picture without betraying confidentiality. Anyway, two members of the team couldn't seem to see eye to eye on anything. They were both in the habit of approaching me individually with any suggestions or complaints. Eventually I realized that this behavior was disruptive to the team, so I told both of them that I appreciated their input, but that in future anything they had to say would be best shared at our team meetings. I recognized that it was important for everything to be in the open, and for each team member to feel their input was valued. It took a little longer that way, but in the end, I think the exercise was good for team morale.</p> <p>What would I have done differently? I learned about the importance of setting team guidelines and ensuring everyone follows the rules... and how important it is to act decisively and proactively, to avoid conflict in the first place.</p>

WHAT IT DOES	CANADIAN FIT
<p>Elicit specific information about the candidate's personal strengths, as a leader, and how they will manage conflict between team members.</p> <p>Elicit information about ability to reflect and learn from experiences and act on it.</p>	<p>Protect morals and standards I'm sure I can outline the general picture without betraying confidentiality...</p> <p>Manage conflict when it escalates Eventually I realized that this behavior was disruptive to the team so I told both of them that I appreciated their input, but that in future anything they had to say would be best shared at our team meetings.</p> <p>I recognized that it was important for everything to be in the open, and for each team member to feel their input was valued.</p>
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	
<p>Protect morals and standards</p> <p>Show leadership in managing conflict when it escalates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show proactive responsibility – individual initiative • Listen actively • Debate with give and take • Build trust based on transparency • Lead from the front – socialize ideas • Express appreciation • Move from opposition into consensus 	

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE <i>(Continued)</i>	CANADIAN FIT <i>(Continued)</i>
<p>Demonstrate a pragmatic approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid unnecessary complication • Appear reasonable • Appear logical • Act impersonally at work, listens to concerns • Consider both task and relationship • Seek to understand but remind staff of the need to move on to task 	<p>Describe conflict clearly two members of the team couldn't seem to see eye to eye on anything. They were both in the habit of approaching me individually with any suggestions or complaints</p> <p>Listen to concerns and appear reasonable I told both of them that I appreciated their input</p> <p>Mediates discussion: I recognized that it was important for everything to be in the open, and for each team member to feel their input was valued</p> <p>Identify productive outcomes logically I told both of them that I appreciated their input but in future anything they had to say would be best shared at our team meetings.</p> <p>Task and relationship with focus on results It took a little longer that way, but in the end, I think the exercise was good for team morale</p>
<p>Demonstrate reflective and continuous learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take stock here and now • Identify outcomes • Understand the emotions • Move discussion to approaches, strategies for desired outcomes 	<p>What would I have done differently? I learned about the importance of setting team guidelines and ensuring everyone follows the rules... and how important it is to act decisively and proactively, to avoid conflict in the first place.</p>
<p>Create credibility in interview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate personal fit for team and company as believable authority 	<p>It took a little longer that way, but in the end, I think the exercise was good for team morale.</p>

CANADIAN CHECK LIST

- ✓ Protect morals and standards
- ✓ Manage conflict when it escalates
- ✓ Describe conflict clearly
- ✓ Listen to concerns and appear reasonable
- ✓ Mediate discussion when necessary
- ✓ Identify productive outcomes logically
- ✓ Combine task and relationship with strong focus on results and action
- ✓ Create credibility in interview

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) **1 2 3 4 5**

- ___ demonstrates concern for morality and standards
- ___ demonstrates ability to mediate or negotiate
- ___ takes leadership role in preventing or reducing conflict through compromise and conciliation
- ___ demonstrates need to build a collaborative team
- ___ understands balance of task and relationship
- ___ demonstrates willingness to learn from situations

INTERVIEW PROCESS QUESTION 5: COULD YOU TELL US WHAT MAKES YOU A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR THIS POSITION?

SCRIPT:

PANEL	CANDIDATE
<p>Sashi: Could you tell us what makes you a good candidate for this position?</p>	<p>Louise: Yes, I have excellent written and verbal communication skills – which I’m constantly improving on. I’m good at leading a team to first consider all the factors involved, and then moving quickly to get things done. To this end, I’m ready to take on additional responsibilities – to challenge myself – and to contribute as much of value as I can. I think I’d be a good mentor for the team and a really good fit for your company.</p>

WHAT IT DOES	CANADIAN FIT
<p>Elicit information about the candidate’s unique personal strengths as a leader and what they bring to this position that other candidates may not.</p>	<p>Describes personal skills not already talked about or summarize skills mentioned e.g. communication skills and continuous learner I have excellent written and verbal communication skills which I’m constantly improving on</p>
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	<p>Add experiences not mentioned and/or summarize strongest personal experiences I’m good at leading a team to first consider all the factors involved, and then moving quickly to get things done.</p> <p>Tie everything together To this end, I’m ready to take on additional responsibilities – to challenge myself and to contribute as much of value as I can.</p> <p>Confirm a good interview I think I’d be a good mentor for the team and a really good fit for your company.</p>
<p>Emphasize strong leadership skills Describe strong leadership experience Add relevant new information Tie interview together – summarizes the fit of self to position</p>	

CANADIAN CHECK LIST

- ✓ Describe personal skills not previously mentioned
- ✓ Summarize most valuable skills
- ✓ Add experience not previously mentioned
- ✓ Make a final summary statement to tie interview together
- ✓ Confirm why you are a great candidate to consider

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) **1 2 3 4 5**

- ___ Summarizes or emphasizes strong leadership skills
- ___ Summarizes or emphasizes strong leadership experiences
- ___ Takes opportunity to add relevant new information
- ___ Ties interview together/ confirms a strong candidacy

INTERVIEW PROCESS QUESTION 6: WE’VE ASKED YOU A LOT OF QUESTIONS. WHAT QUESTION DO YOU HAVE FOR US?

SCRIPT:	
PANEL	CANDIDATE
<p>Sashi: We’ve asked you a lot of questions. What question do you have for us?</p> <p>Sashi: Wow. (Pauses) Well, I guess for me it’s the people. We have a great group of people who work here. It feels like family. (Looks across at Joseph) What about you, Joseph?</p> <p>Joseph: Yeah, definitely the people – such a diverse, fantastic group of co-workers, I learn something new every day.</p> <p>Bob: Right. For me I’d have to say it’s a combination – my colleagues, for sure, and the job itself. There’s so much interesting going on.</p>	<p>Louise: I’d be interested to know what excites each of you about coming into work every day.</p> <p>Louise: Thank you, that’s great to hear. When will you be able to let me know your decision?</p>

WHAT IT DOES	CANADIAN FIT
<p>Elicit information about the candidate’s knowledge or informed curiosity, as a leader.</p> <p>Provide opportunity for candidate to demonstrate leadership qualities such as interest in the team and company or shared values such as loyalty.</p>	<p>Asks solid leadership question – demonstrating believable desire to work with company: I’d be interested to know what excites each of you about coming into work every day</p> <p>Establishes shared values of team building, rapport or empathy Thank you, that’s great to hear.</p> <p>Gives opportunity to demonstrate ambition and entrepreneurial nature When will you be able to let me know your decision?</p>
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	
<p>Use opportunity to demonstrate ambition and entrepreneurial nature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicating a knowledge or informed curiosity of company and industry <p>Ask solid leadership question – demonstrating believable desire to work with company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask about the team dynamic Show they fit as leader <p>Establish shared value e.g. loyalty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prove engagement with company brand Demonstrate how passion fits organization <p>Don’t ask a salary question (save for job offer)</p>	

CANADIAN CHECK LIST

- ✓ Describes personal skills not previously mentioned
- ✓ Summarizes most valuable skills
- ✓ Add experiences not previously mentioned
- ✓ Makes a final summary statement to tie interview together
- ✓ Confirms why they are a great candidate to consider

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) **1 2 3 4 5**

- ___ Summarizes or emphasizes strong leadership skills
- ___ Summarizes or emphasizes strong leadership experiences
- ___ Takes opportunity to add relevant new information
- ___ Ties interview together/ confirms a strong candidacy

INTERVIEW PROCESS FINAL IMPRESSIONS: CLOSING THE INTERVIEW AND DEPARTING

SCRIPT:	
PANEL	CANDIDATE
<p>Sashi: We'll be in touch next week for sure.</p> <p>Sashi: Thanks again for coming in.</p> <p>Sashi: Goodbye, and take care now.</p>	<p>Louise: Thank you, that's great to hear. When will you be able to let me know your decision?</p> <p>Louise (<i>looks at Bob and Joseph in turn</i>): Thank you both so much.</p> <p>Louise: Thank you.</p> <p>Louise: Bye...</p>

WHAT IT DOES	CANADIAN FIT
<p>Complete interview process including stating appreciation, shaking hands and saying goodbye</p> <p>Departing the interview</p>	<p>States appreciation Thank you, that's great to hear. When will you be able to let me know your decision?</p>
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	
<p>Depart calmly and confidently</p> <p>Sense of equality among participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address each person on the panel in saying goodbye <p>Build rapport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give and receive thanks • State appreciation <p>Act easy going, friendly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use facial expressions, ready smile, eye contact <p>Give strong short handshake</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance apart 1.3 m or bent arm length, • Pump hand once <p>Say good bye</p>	<p>States appreciation to each panel member (<i>looks at Bob and Joseph in turn</i>): Thank you both so much. Shake hands firmly</p> <p>States appreciation Thank you.</p> <p>Depart calmly and confidently Bye...</p>

CANADIAN CHECK LIST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Waits for and/or anticipates indication of closure ✓ States appreciation and builds rapport ✓ Appears calm and confident ✓ Shakes hands confidently ✓ Does not appear arrogant, overconfident or superior

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) **1 2 3 4 5**

- ___ Waits for and/or anticipates indication of closure
- ___ Shakes hands confidently
- ___ States appreciation and builds rapport
- ___ Acts calm and confident
- ___ Does not act arrogant, overconfident or superior

PRACTICE 5

If you can identify:

Canadian interviewers expectations by analyzing what they do, how they look and the Canadian fit

Then you have brought the unwritten rules into your awareness:

you can create responses that might better get you to your goal in an interview.

Your informed action can be:

To respond to questions effectively and appropriately in the Canadian context so you can be effective in the interview. (This does not mean you should copy Louise's responses because you won't appear authentic. What you can try to do is understand the kind of response they are looking for and consider how to respond from this greater awareness of the Canadian cultural context.

Your informed TASK can be to:

Design responses that demonstrate specifically what you bring to the company. Go back to your key words and select three of the skills you listed. For example you might have chosen:

1. Handle multinational client relations
2. Develop markets locally and internationally
3. Mentor entry level diverse professionals

Think about each item specifically and how these items lead a team to work towards their goals. Use the culture type frameworks to practice noticing the differences that may matter between cultures and the specific benefits you can offer to an interview panel.

FRAMEWORK TO USE IN PRACTICE 5

PART A FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A CANADIAN PANEL

INTERVIEW QUESTION: _____

WHAT IT DOES	CANADIAN FIT
<hr/> <hr/>	
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE <hr/> <hr/>	

CANADIAN CHECK LIST

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) **1 2 3 4 5**

PART B FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A CANDIDATE

INTERVIEW QUESTION: _____

FROM YOUR CULTURE: HOW YOU UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF THE QUESTION	HOW IT FITS WITH YOUR CULTURE
_____ _____	
FROM YOUR CULTURE: HOW YOU WOULD NORMALLY REPLY TO THE QUESTION _____ _____	

CONNECTING WITH CANADIAN ASSESSMENT

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

ASSESSMENT WITH ADDED BENEFITS

Rank skill level for each item (*least to most appropriate*) 1 2 3 4 5

YOUR WORK WILL BE TO CONNECT THE VALUE IN WHAT THE CANDIDATE BRINGS TO THE EXPECTATION THE CANADIAN PANEL HAS – USE THIS PRACTICE TO BECOME A MORE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR SO THE PANEL CAN SEE THE INTERCULTURAL BENEFIT OF HIRING YOU!

B. DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

The section on developing navigational skills prior to the interview focuses on awareness of cultural diversity, which can increase the possibility for noticing the differences that matter in interviews. This awareness supports the ability to understand diverse perspectives.

However, even with increased cultural awareness, communication during an interview can be confusing. Communication between diverse people can be sent and received in many different ways. When a message is sent through one person's perception and received through another's miscommunication is common. To navigate an interview effectively involves increased adaptive skills in communication.

To navigate the interview successfully it is necessary to increase adaptive skills to accommodate diverse communication styles and behaviours. This section on Communicating Across Cultural Differences analyzes messages from sender and receiver and considers choices for action.

MESSAGES CAN BE CONVEYED/RECEIVED IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS



Communicating successfully across cultural differences in interviews requires special qualities that include the ability to reinterpret or translate messages in a way that makes them comprehensible to others. To navigate the interview successfully, both candidates and interviewers, although grounded in their own cultures, need communication skills to be able interact and communicate effectively in a multicultural interview. They need the ability to move beyond their cultural background, and function comfortably across cultures.¹⁷

¹⁷ Simons, G.F., Vazquez C., & Harris, P.R. (1993). *Transcultural leadership*. Houston: Gulf Publishing Co.

2. NEGOTIATING AN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ENCOUNTER

If IEPs and HR professionals can decode / encode messages they can negotiate an intercultural communication encounter and reduce cultural barriers in an interview.



To encode and decode messages, both sender and receiver need the awareness to move beyond their cultural background and the ability to communicate effectively in a multicultural interview (and environment).¹⁸

APPLYING NEGOTIATING AN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION ENCOUNTER TO AHMED'S INTERVIEW FINAL IMPRESSIONS: SAYING GOODBYE

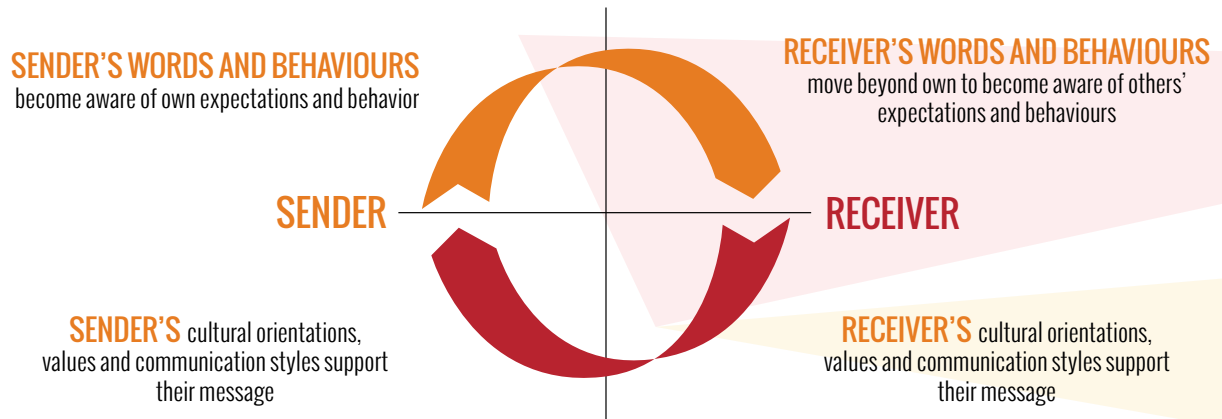
In this interaction Ahmed is the sender, Bob is the receiver. Bob is closing the interview by reaching to shake hands with Ahmed and saying, "Very nice meeting you. Thanks for coming in." Ahmed stands and shakes Bob's hand and replies, "My colleague, Peter Howell, asked me to pass on his regards to you."

In the moment Ahmed's comment has not landed comfortably for Bob. He has received the message and interpreted it through his own perception that the interview is over and isn't open for lingering conversation. He is also uncomfortable from his Canadian culture with the idea that Ahmed is asking for favoritism—not based on merit but on who he knows. If Bob took the opportunity to decode the message accounting for selective perceptions of Ahmed he could consider Ahmed's comment as a sincere intention of connecting people and building relationships from Ahmed's cultural comfort with giving and receiving favors through personal networks (often family). In this case Bob may then have decoded the message and finished the conversation with, "Thanks for passing along his regards."

Successful communicators build bridges between themselves and others. In this example Bob has closed the conversation and interview in a more relational way than he did in the video. He can come to an informed action that considers Ahmed's expectations and the benefits of the difference—choosing to integrate Ahmed's relational ways with his own need to complete the interview in a timely manner.

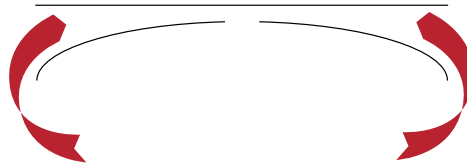
¹⁸ Simons, G.F., Vazquez C., & Harris, P.R. (1993). Transcultural leadership.

3. COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURAL DIFFERENCES SUCCESSFULLY



Consider the benefits of both communication partners similarities and differences¹⁹

REVIEW GOALS



Explore possibility of how they can work together and integrate them to get to goal

Successful communicators build bridges between themselves and others. They create inclusive spaces with characteristics like openness, flexibility and curiosity and choose informed action to reach goals.

By considering the job description, your culture specific perspectives and Canadian unwritten rules you will create more options to encode and decode messages and communicate across cultural differences more effectively. You can develop skills in presenting yourself in the interview as an effective candidate.

¹⁹ Simons, G.F., Vazquez C., & Harris, P.R. (1993). Transcultural leadership.

PRACTICE 6

If you learn:

to encode and decode messages by moving beyond your cultural background to become aware of diverse others expectations and behaviours

Then you can negotiate intercultural communication:
and bridge the differences to create an inclusive interview

Your informed action can be:

To consider the benefits of the differences that show up in an intercultural interview

Your informed TASK can be to:

Review your goals prior to an interview and, in critical moments of communicating in the interview, work to build a bridge between you and the interviewers by considering how they may view your actions and responses.

You can practice this by viewing the videos looking for messages that are not communicated successfully due to being sent through one person's perception and received through another's. Develop skill in reinterpreting or translating the message in ways that makes it comprehensible to the other.

Gaining this ability will help you move beyond your cultural background, to function more effectively across cultures.

4. USING CHOICE POINTS IN CRITICAL MOMENT DIALOGUES

For additional practice to consider how to negotiate an intercultural communication encounter, visit the Center for Intercultural Education website: <http://www.norquest.ca/navigating-the-interview>. You will find an online activity to practice negotiating an intercultural communication encounter from the Navigating the Interview videos. You will receive feedback for each choice you make to support you to better understand how different actions might open up or close down communication within an interview.

C. AFTER THE INTERVIEW

1. INTRODUCING THE SOMETHING'S UP! CYCLE

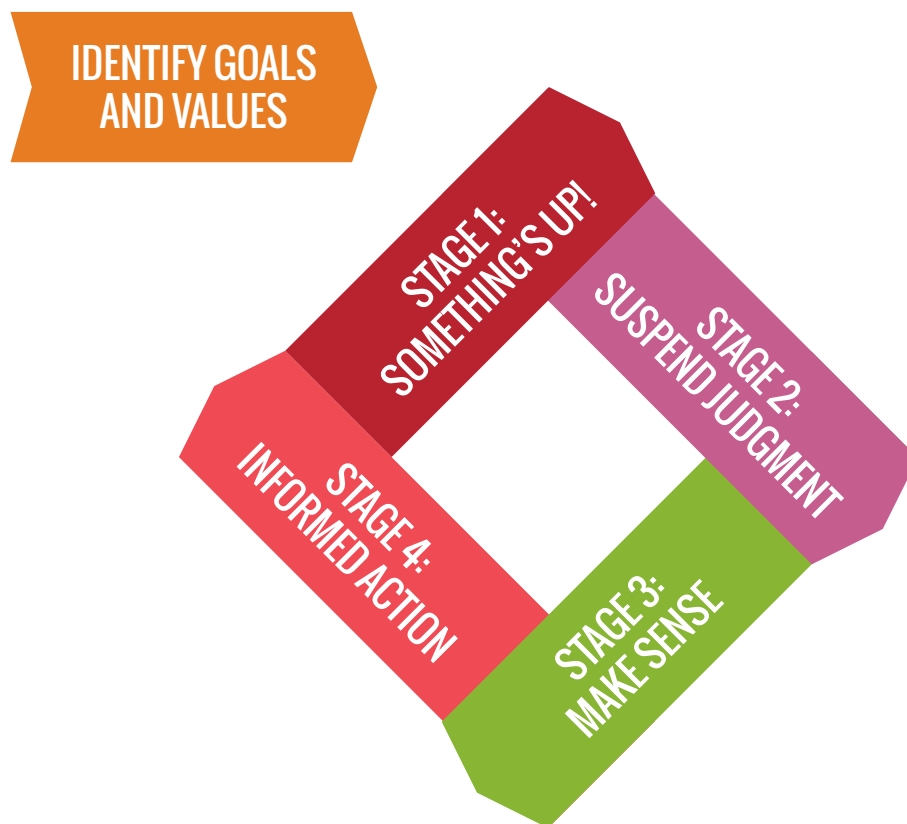
To develop skills needed to make sense in the critical moments of an interview some reflective practices are included. These practices include developing an understanding of cultural general orientations and workplace values and applying them specifically to Canadian culture to understand what supports the Canadian interview panel. Being able then to consider diverse orientation and by working around a reflective cycle called the Something's Up Cycle²⁰ with cultural specific information increases understanding and develops skill to cope with the diversity.

Holding the two perspectives and being able to look at the benefits of each opens up the possibility to gain from the diversity in an integrative way.

We provide exemplars using this reflective intercultural cycle which lead to informed actions.

INTRODUCING THE SOMETHING'S UP! CYCLE

Figure 1. *Something's Up! Cycle*



Adapted from Schaetti, Ramsey, and Watanabe – Personal Leadership

²⁰ Schaetti, B.F., & Ramsey, S.J. & Watanabe G.C. (2008) Personal Leadership: Making a world of difference. Seattle: FlyingKite Publications

THE SOMETHING'S UP! CYCLE

The Something's Up Cycle provides a 4 step framework for examining misunderstandings that are culture-based, and a template for working through the critical incidents and digging deeper into the complexity of issues inherent in each. When used consistently as a strategy for understanding differences, the Something's Up Cycle helps participants develop intercultural skills and to more effectively manage cross-cultural issues that arise as a result of working together on increasingly diverse teams.

STAGE 1: Something's Up

This first stage of the cycle is about noticing differences and usually occurs when a person's behavior does not meet with the expectations of their team-members. It is also about describing as accurately as possible the facts of the situation.

Signs that "something is up" include:

- Feeling threatened, overwhelmed, disapproving, or exhilarated
- Feeling the need to hang on to something familiar
- Withdrawing without explanation
- Different understandings of an agreement
- Thinking everything is fine when another team member is distressed, upset, or frustrated
- Feeling confused

At this stage of the cycle, the questions to ask are:

- What happened?
- How did (might) each of the people involved feel?

STAGE 2: Identify and Suspend Judgment

Judgment involves all the ways of coming to conclusions about what has been perceived. Judging something as right or wrong or good or bad is a normal, often automatic response to many situations, in many ways, this reaction is a natural display of cultural values. Our culture gives structure and meaning to our experiences and enables us to make sense of the vast amounts of information we receive every day. In cross-cultural interactions, however these types of judgments can get in the way of mutual understanding and innovation.

When we take the time to reflect on a situation – in other words, when we identify judgment – we can gain valuable insights into what is happening and increase our cultural self-awareness. When you try to identify a judgment, consider these categories of conclusions we may be coming to:

- Credibility: that person does not seem credible, how can I trust them?
- Leadership ability: That person is not a good leader
- Fairness: That's not fair
- Professional: That person is not professional
- Competence: That person just doesn't seem competent.
- Trust: I'm not sure I can trust this person.

At this stage of the cycle, the questions to ask are:

- What are my judgments?
- What are my conclusions or perceptions of the other?

STAGE 3: Make Sense

In stage 3, we attempt to make sense of a situation by observing general patterns of behavior and expression and then using these observations to figure out (or anticipate) a misunderstanding.

It is at this stage where we start to employ some of the cultural orientations. These useful categories can help us make sense of or predict important differences in “the way things are done” as well as understand the relationship between these and judgments or conclusions that come about when expectations are not met. If expectations are not met in any of these areas, misunderstandings can arise and influence the way people interact and perceive one another.

At this stage of the cycle, the questions to ask are:

- What is this situation/misunderstanding about?
- What did each person expect? (What is each person’s normal?)
- How are the expectations of the people involved similar and/or different?

STAGE 4: Informed Action

In the fourth and final stage of the Something’s Up! Cycle, participants are prepared to respond to the situation. Informed action implies that different perspectives have been considered and the best response possible has emerged.

At this stage of the cycle, the questions to ask are:

- What can be done to move forward?
- What are the short term actions?
- What are the long term considerations?

Some possible actions that may be used include:

- Review goals to determine if the misunderstanding is getting in the way of important goals.
- Use the cultural orientations and workplace values categories to have a meaningful conversation about cultural differences to seek mutual understanding.
- Change or adapt to meet goals based on clearer understanding.
- Explore culturally inclusive strategies.
- Explore the upsides and downsides of each perspective as a means toward innovation and creative alternatives.
- Discuss opportunities and implications for change or adjustment on organizational, personal or team levels. Be purposeful about building relationships and getting to know one another.

2. APPLYING THE SOMETHING'S UP! CYCLE TO MEI'S INTERVIEW

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: SMALL TALK

<p>STAGE 1</p> <p>Something's Up!</p> <p><i>Notice the conversation is not what you expected and describe it.</i></p>	<p>Panel Candidate seems respectful and polite but only repeats words she hears us use and doesn't offer anything except the briefest reply (Every effort we made to chat just ended.)</p> <p>Expectation named: have a short chat to build rapport and comfort before moving to the formal interview.</p>	<p>Mei Li Panel asked me about the traffic and how I got there. It didn't start as a serious interview but I tried to listen and then answer their questions clearly and politely.</p> <p>Expectation named: to have a serious interview about my engineering ability.</p>
<p>What happened?</p>	<p>Panel enters into the interview in a formal way (different than day to day workplace interactions) with greetings, introductions and handshakes and then moves into more informal questions about refreshments, parking and transportation before explaining the interview process.</p>	<p>Mei Li responds to the introductions with the same level of formality. She listens carefully and tries to respond to the questions asked briefly and personally. She does not offer anything new into the conversation. She is prepared to begin the interview when asked.</p>
<p>How might each person feel?</p>	<p>Bob might be feeling confused and withdraw as he is not getting the expected response to have a quick chat; Sashi and Joseph likely feel supportive as both encourage Mei Li to chat.</p>	<p>Mei Li likely feels stressed and unsure of herself as the interview begins. She might feel the questions are trivial and may be unsure of their fit in a serious interview.</p>
<p>STAGE 2</p> <p>Suspend Judgment</p> <p><i>Judgment and conclusions drawn</i></p>	<p>Panel likely judges the candidate as passive, meek and not capable and needing help to build connections or rapport.</p> <p>Panel concludes Mei Li needs to join in the 'normal' turn taking of small talk.</p>	<p>Mei Li may judge the panel isn't professional and that they may be wasting valuable time.</p> <p>Mei Li concludes panel needs to get serious with their questioning so she can deliver the essential information about her job experiences and skills relating to the job posting.</p>

<p>STAGE 3</p> <p>Make Sense</p> <p><i>Employ cultural orientations and workplace values</i></p>	<p>Orientation:</p> <p>Communicates directly+ Informal protocol+</p> <p>Workplace Value:</p> <p>Building rapport Opportunity to gain credibility</p>	<p>Orientation:</p> <p>Communicates indirectly+ Formal protocol+</p> <p>Workplace Value:</p> <p>Acting with professionalism Demonstrating accountability</p>
<p>What did each expect?</p>	<p>Panel expected to connect with Mei during small talk to move to formal interview with rapport</p> <p>Small talk Functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soften directness • Build comfort for interview as a warm up • Build rapport with egalitarian impersonal discussion • Create opportunities to relate and agree • Establishes turn-taking • Establishes personal distance • Create casual beginning (but not long or too personal) • Separates social/professional 	<p>Mei expected to start the interview by presenting herself on her professional ability</p> <p>Small talk Functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsure of shift from formality of introductions to informality and casual chat • Uncomfortable with small talk • Builds rapport through showing respect to those higher • Unsure of turn-taking/linear point for point • Unsure how/when to jump in • Waits for signal from senior in org. to 'begin' • Can't understand the point of small talk—seems insincere • Connects social/professional
<p>What are the similarities and differences in the way things are done?</p>	<p>Formality</p> <p>Canada</p> <p>uncomfortable with formality</p> <p>Building rapport</p> <p>Canada</p> <p>'being friendly' isn't the same as 'being a friend', ready smile and frequent use of non-verbals</p> <p>Professional communication</p> <p>Canada</p> <p>small talk is normal, simple and provides places to connect and agree, conversation moves back and forth with short linear turn taking, equality will ensure turn taking, topics separates social and professional by topic</p>	<p>Formality</p> <p>China</p> <p>comfortable with formality</p> <p>Building rapport</p> <p>China</p> <p>being friendly is being sincere and loyal, minimal body language and expressions</p> <p>Professional communication</p> <p>China</p> <p>small talk is uneasy- silence and listening is normal, conversation is cyclical and holistic, respectfully will try to economize on other's time, mixes social and professional</p>
<p>What are the relationships between these and judgment?</p>	<p>Bob's first impression may be that Mei lacks leadership ability, Joseph and Sashi may feel that she isn't competent in the interview</p>	<p>Mei may feel that the panel had a kind of 'insincere' friendly interest in her personal comfort</p>

<p>Stage 4 Informed Action</p> <p><i>Review goals, consider different perspectives and change, adapt or align to meet goals</i></p>	<p>Panel expected to connect with Mei during small talk to move to formal interview with rapport.</p> <p>Possible actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek mutual understanding by explaining small talk into the process of the interview e.g. “we are just going to take a minute to chat before getting down to serious questions” • explore culturally inclusive strategies by asking a cultural informant what might be helpful actions to set up a comfortable interview • consider the different workplace orientations and values to create a process that is mutually inclusive 	<p>Mei expected to start the interview by presenting herself formally on her professional ability</p> <p>Possible actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeks nonverbal ways to respond and connect e.g. smile, make brief eye contact, nod • agree with the speaker and continue with the same topic to add a positive comment (in harmony with speaker) • connect and agree with the speaker using a complement about the Canadian skill e.g. “Canadians seem able to drive well in bad winter conditions
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PRACTICE 6

If you felt you had a culture-based misunderstanding during an interview you can work through the incident and dig deeper into the complexity of the issue to develop intercultural skills to more effectively manage cross-cultural issues that arise. Reflect after the interview by using the Something’s Up! Cycle

You will review your goals, consider different perspectives and change, adapt or align to meet the goals.

Your informed action can be to:

Answer interview questions effectively and appropriately to reach your goals.

Your informed TASK can be to:

Answer interview question in ways that work across cultures.

Create a specific answer from the job description key words:

For example:

1. hire a leader
2. who can manage multiple projects
3. and direct staff to perform

Choose an interview question:

For example:

Question 3: Describe a time recently where you motivated your team members to complete a project on time and on budget? What approach did you use?

Watch the 4 different candidate’s responses to the question, in this example question 3. Choose a culture-based misunderstanding that arises to work through the cycle. (Use the CANADIAN INTERVIEW ANALYSIS and CULTURAL TYPES LEWIS MODEL for making sense of question 3.



V. APPENDIX

SCRIPTS OF THE INTERVIEW

For complete scripts of the interview, visit the Center for Intercultural Education website:
<http://www.norquest.ca/navigating-the-interview>.

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