

Cultural Profile Submission Form

Individual Cultural Analysis

Cultural Parameter Analyzed	Achievement - Birthright
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Observations

Method 1.	Attended orientation describing university system in France, which was conducted by our French, long-time Parisian resident, and ESCP faculty member.
Observations	Our professor described the rigorous process for admission to ESCP Europe. Students must attend two years of preparatory classes after graduation from high school. The preparatory classes prepare students for the entrance exam to ESCP or other grandes écoles, which are Paris's elite private colleges. Admission to the prep schools themselves is based on prior academic work and is often competitive. Moreover, the prep schools can be expensive. After completion of various preparatory school courses, about 7,000 students sit for the exam for ESCP Europe. Of these, 900 pass the exam and are invited for interviews. Of these interviewees, about 350 receive and accept a spot at ESCP. Although income and family status play no direct role in admission (He described a case where the Prime Minister's son was rejected due to poor performance in the interview), they are the best predictor of admission, since only families with extensive resources can prepare their children to meet the demands of the admissions process and pay for expensive prep schools. Our professor explained that the French Revolution aimed to eliminate an elite class based on birthright and replace it with a meritocratic elite. However, he believes the current system has also created an elite based on birthright, despite the intention and appearance of meritocracy, and diversity initiatives are limited to just a few low-income students each year.
Conclusion	As in many countries, including the US, the French elite is a well-entrenched group. In theory, class mobility is smiled upon because of the legitimacy it lends to a purportedly meritocratic system, but in practice, class mobility is rare and difficult.
Comments	

Method 2.	Daily observation of ESCP students while on campus and at various Paris elementary schools while biking to class every morning
Observations	At ESCP Europe, there seems to be a roughly equal representation of males and females. However, underrepresented racial minorities are rare. While riding my bike to class and taking the metro, I can see many parents bringing their children to school and observed that racial minorities make up a sizable portion of Paris's population. Still, they are not represented proportionately at ESCP.
Conclusion	Racial minorities may not be equally integrated in Paris's elite higher education system.
Comments	

Visual Information



#1	Students eating lunch at the school cafeteria. As in this picture, few students from underrepresented minorities are seen on campus.
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Cultural Parameter Analyzed	Involvement
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Observations

Method 1.	Class with French Professor
Observations	In his lecture, our professor emphasized the importance of the “social graces,” and pointed out that they are a key determinant of success in French culture. He said that personal relationships must be established as a basis for cooperation, and provided making small talk with a store clerk to get help as an example.
Conclusion	The professor’s comments indicate a strong relationship orientation to involvement.
Comments	I have personally experienced the importance of establishing relationships as a foreigner in Paris. When I use appropriate salutations in French, I easily get help from locals, whereas when I simply state what I want with out using the social graces, I often get ignored. In the U.S., directness usually elicits a response, even if it is a negative one. This represents a clear difference in the cultural value of relationships.

Method 2.	Interview/Q&A with PwC partner
Observations	The partner emphasized communication and cultural experience as being critical to success, rather than technical aspects of the job. She also gave long and elaborate explanations when answering students’ questions, always making sure the student was satisfied with the response.
Conclusion	The Interview/Q&A with the French partner indicates a strong relationship orientation to involvement
Comments	In discussions with PwC partners in the U.S., I have observed more importance placed on technical aspects of the job. They also tend to be more direct and succinct. This indicates a clear difference in orientation to involvement between two cultures.

Visual Information



#1	This is a group of friends who work for the same company in Paris. They are hanging out together outside of work, which is an example of communication and cultural experiences being an important part of their job.
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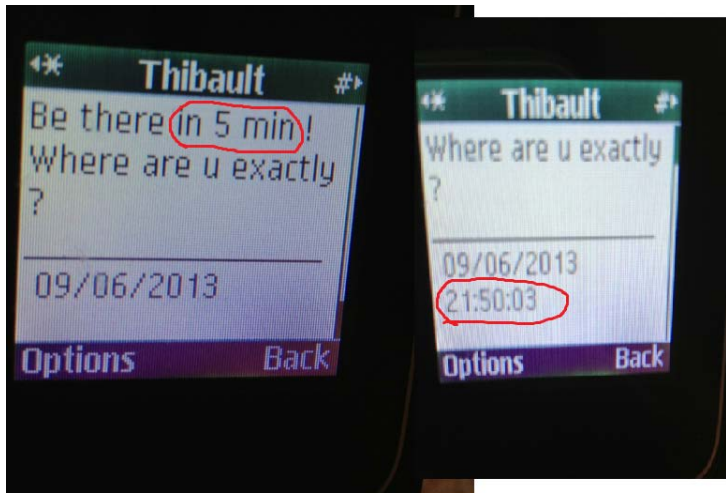
Cultural Parameter Analyzed	Organization: Schedule vs. Flow
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Observations

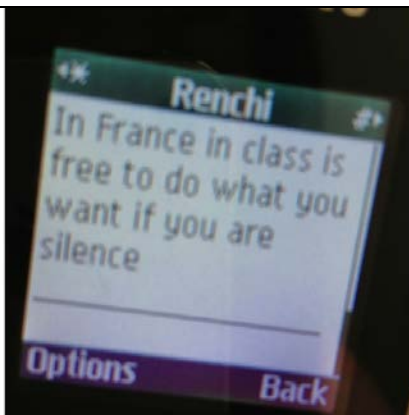
Method 1.	Interacting with locals
Observations	<p>My Parisian friend and I planned to meet up at Republique for a drink. We were supposed to meet at 21:40. At 21:50, he sent me a message saying “be there in 5min!” But he did not arrive till 22:10! This observation may seem to an individual case, but similar situation took place when his friends met up with us later that night as well. They were about 15 minutes late.</p> <p>The same week, another Parisian friend was also late for our meeting at Bastille. Moreover, when I tried to excuse myself and go home early, he asked, “Why don’t you stay longer, sleep in, and just go to class late?”</p>
Conclusion	<p>From the observations above, I noticed that appointments times are not well-respected, and commitment to the current activity/conversation is viewed as a high priority.</p> <p>Therefore, in terms of the culture dimension of Organization, French people lean towards “Flow”, rather than “Schedule”.</p>
Comments	The observations may make a stronger case if I had more interaction with locals.

Method 2.	Interview with locals
Observations	<p>Our Parisian tour guide told me that when French people are much more flow-oriented. She said that when she was in school, professors would come 10 minutes late.</p> <p>According to my experience during our only session led by a French professor French professors are not very strict with the time given to students as breaks. For example, on Monday June 17th, our professor announced that we were to have a 15-minute break. When there was about 3 minutes left, I went to her for some quick clarification on some class material. Our conversation topic soon turned into French culture, auditing and accounting jobs in Paris, international rotation, etc. At least 10 minutes passed, and I finally felt obliged to end the conversation, even though the professor did not seem to be in a hurry to resume class at all.</p> <p>My friend, who had attended college in <i>Ecole Pour l'Informatique et les Techniques Avancées</i>, also commented that most of his classmates would always do homework, check their phones, etc while in class.</p>
Conclusion	<p>Again, I observed that appointments times are not well-respected, and commitment to the current activity/conversation is viewed as a high priority. People tend to work on multiple tasks at a time. Time is viewed as flexible and chaotic, with events occurring simultaneously.</p> <p>Therefore, in terms of the culture dimension of Organization, French people lean towards “Flow”, rather than “Schedule”</p>
Comments	Due to the fact that we had limited interaction with French professors, I could not obtain many first-hand observations in the classroom setting. Therefore, I relied on the interviews as evidence as well.

Visual Information



1 This text message exchange demonstrates the different cultural perception of time.



#2 Text-message explanation of French classroom etiquette by a Parisian.

Cultural Parameter Analyzed	Explicitness: Direct vs. Indirect
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Observations

Method 1.	Interactions with locals
Observations	When you enter a store of any kind, such as a boulangerie or clothing boutique, it is customary to immediately greet the first employee that you see with a “bonjour” or “bonsoir.” It is also normal to say “au revoir” after the conclusion of any transaction before you leave the establishment. Locals also appear to be very comfortable voicing their opinions even if they are negative. A clerk in the grocery store actively voiced her discontent to me the other day when I tried to pay for something with a 10 euro bill and she did not have much change in her drawer. She openly expressed her frustration.
Conclusion	I think that the immediate acknowledgement of others when you enter a store is indicative of the direct communication style that is prevalent in France. My interactions with locals have led me to believe that they are polite but to the point. They feel comfortable expressing negative opinions and do not seem to expect others to take those contrary opinions personally.
Comments	The examples I am using here are taken from the last few weeks in Paris but my assessment of the French as having a more direct communication style is also based upon previous experiences of living and studying abroad in France. I have found that the French, once you are acquainted, are very forthcoming with their opinions and are receptive to alternate viewpoints and debate.

Method 2.	Observations made during presentations
Observations	Based upon observations made during one of our French professor’s presentation, the PwC company visit, and in class with the other, I have noticed that the French display a mixture of direct and indirect communication styles in a lecture-based setting. All of the above presentations were accompanied by a slide show which the presenters then elaborated upon. At the same time, the presenters encouraged questions and allowed themselves to move away from the prepared presentation. In addition to the format of his presentation, our professor also discussed how the French are very upfront and proud of their academic achievements. He said that French people who have attended the best higher education schools will make it known within the first fifteen minutes of meeting someone. In the U.S., I feel like people are less likely to disclose something of this nature to someone they have just met.
Conclusion	I think that the French tend to be more direct than indirect in their presentation styles. The presentations were well organized and the presenters stick to them or return to the planned material after a deviation. This assessment may be biased because all of the aforementioned presentations were made in an educational setting, but I believe that the presenters’ willingness to answer questions from the students further supports the notion that the French value clarity and do not shy away from conflicting viewpoints. I think that the fact that the presenters were comfortable getting off topic is more indicative of their organizational orientation toward the flow style than and a leaning toward indirect communication.

Comments	The French presenters I observed are not a very diverse group in that they are all highly educated and successful people who were speaking to a group of students. It would be interesting to observe presentations made by our French peers.
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Visual Information



#1	This is an example of explicit signage on a Parisian street. There is no question that this is a paying spot. It is very direct and not at all subtle.
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Cultural Parameter Analyzed	Universalism versus Particularism
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Observations

Method 1.	Conversation with local students at a Paris bus stop
Observations	I wasn't sure that my metro-pass could be used for bus also. So I asked my friends whether I should prepare some coins in case my metro-pass does not work. They told me that I just need to say "Bonjour" to the bus driver with a kind smile while I was scanning the card and the driver would not notice. Furthermore, they said that I was a foreigner so that I could easily get away with it by telling them I don't know the rules.
Conclusion	Our conversation suggests that they have a very particular attitude towards authority.
Comments	This observation could be biased to some extent. It is because most of the locals we interact with are young college students. They might not be a perfect representation of the whole French culture. It is possible that older generations could be more universal towards authority.

Method 2.	Observed the first class/ presentation by professor on June 3 rd
Observations	Prior to the presentation, the professor had given us an outline of the presentation. However, he tended to diverge from specific talking points on the outline. His presentation was very conversational and largely based on his own experience. Furthermore, our professor was willing to discuss new topics when a relevant question is asked during the presentation.
Conclusion	The professor's behavior suggests a relatively more particular attitude.
Comments	Method 2 is complementary to method 1. It implies that even older generations in France tend to be more particular than universal towards authority.

Visual Information



#1	This photo shows people crossing the street against the light. This shows that people may disregard the rules according to the situation. In this photo, since there were no vehicles passing through, pedestrians assumed it was safe to cross the street. The photo supports our interpretation that the culture of Paris is more particular than universal towards authority.
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Cultural Parameter Analyzed	Individualist vs. Collectivist
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Observations

Method 1.	Observing Parisians at cafés and restaurants
Observations	Parties consist of only one or two people, as opposed to large groups dining all together. Seeing single diners in public is not uncommon or considered socially odd like it sometimes is in America. When we tried to seat a group of 8 of us together at dinner time, the host was very frustrated and indicated that a table with everyone sitting together would be very difficult to find. Each person in the party typically orders a different dish, and in larger groups this is especially true. People also do not mind if their dinner companion takes a long time to finish their meal or people finish eating at different times. Servers will come and remove plates as people finish individually, rather than waiting to clear the table all at once.
Conclusion	Because the French are extremely flexible with individual decisions even in a group setting, and do not regard single diners or parties consisting of individuals with different preferences and eating speeds as odd, I would conclude that they are more oriented towards individualism. This conclusion is supported by the confusion that we experienced when attempting to eat in a large group, which surprised our French host and he seemed to regard with frustration.
Comments	My previous conclusion of a collectivist orientation based upon the comfort Parisians had with extremely close dining quarters and their accommodation of cramped personal space was flawed because it did not take into account the big city effect and also failed to distinguish the subtleties of a relationship orientation from a collectivist orientation. Speaking with a French person about their social experiences would have helped.

Method 2.	Our liaison's description of metro etiquette and time spent on the metro
Observations	Our cultural liaison briefed us on proper metro behavior. The biggest tips were to avoid all eye contact and to speak softly. He explained that being chatty or overly social was considered very rude and that making eye contact could be interpreted as wanting to engage in romantic activities or to fight. In short, keeping to yourself on the metro rather than engaging with other riders is key. From my own time spent on the metro, I confirmed that both of these pieces of advice were correct; people wanted

	to be left alone during their transit. I also observed that if groups rode the metro together, they were fine with sitting in entirely different places in the car. Finally, I also saw an incredible diversity of fashion, even within groups of friends. No one ever looked askance at another person's choice of outfit, even with some very bold choices.
Conclusion	The desire of Parisians to keep to themselves in public places, their comfort with splitting up groups, and diverse choices regarding individual appearance point to an individualist orientation.
Comments	My original conclusion that metro etiquette was based on a collectivist orientation and respect for shared space was slightly incorrect. This behavior is actually due to the fact that Parisians value their personal space so highly even in a crowded city, which means that they will attempt to isolate themselves through politeness. I'm not sure if I would have picked up on this subtlety without considering our liaison's advice about riding the metro.

Visual Information

#1	This photo shows a metro car on the number 3 line. You can see people sitting and standing close together, indicating their acceptance of and adjustments for a public mode of transit. This indicates that as a culture, the French are inclined towards collectivism, where the group is a more prevalent form of organization, and people are willing to modify their behavior in order to fit into the group and make it a more pleasant environment for all members.
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Cultural Parameter Analyzed	Time: Short-Term and Long-Term
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Observations

Method 1.	Conversation with Local
Observations	A local French man who spoke English very well explained to me that the French are very proud of their history and language. They are always willing to talk about their country's past achievements, such as the French Revolution, and they are still very resentful that French is no longer the language of diplomacy. I also observed this in our professor's lecture in which he chose to focus solely on French culture and tradition as opposed to France and the European Union, a relatively new organization, as the outline suggested he would. Finally, local tour guides have generally focused on France's historical glory and old buildings, as opposed to the current state of France or newer architectural designs from newer buildings.
Conclusion	The local's comments and the observations from our professor's presentation and tour guides reveal that the French's attitude towards time is long-term as opposed to short-term. Past history and tradition is surely the focus in France.
Comments	The French man was not the first person to explain this phenomena to me, therefore, I believe it to be very accurate. As for the tour guides, one may suggest that this is how all tours are conducted, and although many tourists visit old buildings and historical sites in Paris, the French preserve the sites with extreme care, and the locals are well versed in France's past glory and historical achievements as well.

Method 2.	Professor's Class
Observations	Our professor explained to our class that it is very difficult to dismiss an employee. It may take up to 3 months to dismiss an employee and the company must give reasons for the dismissal. In addition, she explained all stock option plans in France have a 4-year vesting period. Finally, she taught us that employees share in the profits of a company, but the employees receive this bonus 5 years later.
Conclusion	It is clear from these examples that the French view time in the long-term. Relationships are critical in the business world, especially with employees. In addition, bonuses and raises lag behind recent performance to reward long-term strategy.
Comments	Because law regulates some of these examples, the evidence provided for our conclusion that the French have a long-term attitude towards time is appropriate.

Visual Information



#1	<p>This photo illustrates the French's long-term attitude towards time. A French man explained to me that the stereotype of an American is shallow or fake. The French do not believe it is genuine to be overly nice and polite. It is easy to see that while riding the metro most people keep to themselves by looking down, reading, or listening to music. It is rare to receive a smile or greeting from a stranger. No one made eye contact with each other during the whole metro ride. The reason for this being that relationships are highly valued and take time to develop, therefore, time is not wasted on small talk that will not lead to anything. Relationships are carefully maintained. The Frenchmen told me that it is easier to become an acquaintance in America, but it easier to go from being an acquaintance to a friend in France. Again, this illustrates their long-term attitude towards time.</p>
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Final Profile

Personal Profiles

Most of the group members tend towards an achievement orientation, except for one, who assessed herself in the middle of the achievement - birthright spectrum. This is fairly typical of the US, which traditionally values innovation, ideas, and progress, even if they do not come from an established source.

All of the group members tended towards "particularism", so no one considered him or herself a universalist. This is typical of American culture. Although contracts and most laws are respected for the practical reasons of creating functioning markets and society, Americans aren't known for their blind and unconditional adherence to *all* rules, even when they don't make sense, given American's favorable view of independent thinking. This means that Americans are better suited to adapt to cultures where rules are sometimes violated than people from a strictly universalist culture are, but Americans might still have difficulties navigating a culture where laws are widely disregarded.

There was a slight tendency towards a relationship orientation among the group. Although Americans tend to be more task-oriented, building relationships in the process of accomplishing tasks and to facilitate future cooperation are an essential part of American business. Since both a task and relationship orientation are important in American business, that explains the diversity of the group's responses. The focus on both aspects also enables Americans to navigate both task and relationship oriented countries.

The individualist / collectivist question resulted in a wide variety of answers. Several group members fell in the middle, while others tended towards one end of the spectrum. Americans tend to be more individualist, which makes it harder for them to navigate collectivist cultures, such as in Asia, and, to a lesser extent, Europe.

Our group gravitated towards a more long-term mode of thinking. This is not unusual for Americans, especially since our economy is well-developed, stable, and more predictable than in some rapidly developing countries, where long-term business plans may not be feasible. The long-term orientation may be attributable to our group's personalities, since there are obviously many Americans with short-term outlooks.

Our group members ranged from more indirect to extremely direct. Americans tend to be more direct than in many other countries, where directness may be seen as unsophisticated, disrespectful, or even rude. In these countries, Americans will encounter difficulties as a result of their more direct method of communication.

Our team was largely expressive. This is quite typical for Americans. Americans could run into difficulty in more neutral countries, since Americans are not used to looking for subtle cues regarding their coworkers' emotions. Americans might assume everything is fine since if their neutral-tendency coworkers don't express any disapproval or negative emotions. However, the foreign coworkers might still actually disapprove and are merely

unaccustomed to expressing emotions with the same forthrightness that Americans would.

The assessments revealed that most group members are very flow oriented. This seems very unsurprising for a group of American students. In the business world, Americans would tend to be more schedule oriented, and they would have trouble dealing with an environment where deadlines are not respected or even set.

Country Profile

Comment on the following:

1. *What is your conclusion about the cultural orientation of your destination (list the tendencies you noticed for each feature)?*

Our observations led us to believe that in Paris, social status is strongly influenced by birthright, whereas achievement plays a smaller role. We have also noticed that Parisians tend to be relationship-oriented in their approach to business and social interactions. Parisians seem more particularist in their application of rules and laws, and they are comfortable directly expressing their own opinions. Along the same lines, Parisian culture is considered to have an orientation towards individualism. Lastly, we observed a flow-type attitude in the performance of activities and a long-term attitude towards time.

2. *Did all your data gathering methods point to the same cultural features? If not, how did you resolve the contradictions you observed?*

Most of us gathered observations through observations of French behavior in public settings, rather than by interacting directly with French nationals. This method of gathering data was somewhat flawed because it was at times difficult to connect the interpretation of our observations with the reality of French life and the cultural profile because we could not confirm our conclusions. However, most of our data did lead to a coherent set of cultural features. Our team was able to accurately identify six of the seven cultural traits based on experiences and interactions around the city. The only major difficulty was correctly identifying the individualist orientation, since Parisian life is very crowded and centralized, which can easily lead to an incorrect impression of collectivism, which is actually more a reflection of relationship orientation. Collectivism runs counter to the French tendencies towards flow, expressiveness, and particularism, while individualism does not.

3. *How do the cultural characteristics of your destination differ from those of the U.S.?*

It is important to note certain cultural characteristics of Paris that differ from those of the U.S. France is believed to be more Birthright-oriented than the United States, which is seen in how the its most prestigious universities produce almost all of the heads of

industry and government. Because of its history, France is strongly Particularistic, while the U.S. tends to appreciate the rules more. The French have a strong Relationship bias, which contrasts with the American Task bias. Seen by their love for old brands and buildings, long history, and traditional language, the French are certainly oriented to the Long-term. Americans possess a Short-term orientation. Moreover, both cultures are highly individualistic and direct. Finally, the French are more Expressive and a Flow culture, while Americans are more Neutral and a Schedule culture.

4. What other interesting aspects of culture did you notice related to this assignment?

We also observed many other interesting aspects of culture. For example, even though the French are extremely fond of the French Revolution, which aimed to eliminate an elite class based on birthright, the present system is not so in regards to many aspects of life, such as education. Diversity initiatives are limited to just a few low-income students each year as few students from underrepresented minorities are seen on campus. It is of interest to note this fact, despite the intention and appearance of a meritocracy. Furthermore, although the French do not talk to strangers because of their Relationship bias, it is imperative that they greet people when walking into a store or restaurant, even if they do not personally know the owner. In addition, many cafe and restaurants place their outdoor chairs to face the street, allowing people to watch others pass by. This, coupled with the attitude that you must always be dressed fashionably or risk being scoffed, reveal that the French may value long term relationships and individualism, but they are certain not oblivious to the actions and attitudes of the strangers around them.

Conclusions

1. What challenges might Americans have doing business with people who have the cultural features you identified in your destination?

Achievement/Birthright

France is considerably more birthright-oriented than the U.S. Therefore, people with cultural profiles similar to that of France may tend to boast about their prestigious family or educational backgrounds, or their senior statuses within an organization. Americans may see this as an expression of excessive pride. Alternatively, it may not occur to Americans how important these backgrounds and statuses are to their French counterparties. Thus, it can be a challenge for Americans to properly recognize their counterparties' birthrights by showing additional respect in a business setting.

Universalism/Particularism

The Particularist tendency in France is stronger than that in the U.S. Both countries value individual thinking and creativity more than strict rules. However, when doing business with people with cultural profiles similar to that of France, Americans may still be surprised by the degree to which their counterparties make their own decisions instead of answering to their supervisors.

Relationship/Task

French people tend to put relationships over rules. Therefore, it may seem perfectly acceptable for people with cultural profiles similar to that of France to be late in order to finish a conversation. This could present serious challenges for Task-oriented Americans who put high regards on time and efficiency, as they may be irritated by their foreign counterparties' seemingly "unprofessional" behavior. On the other hand, the foreign counterparties may conclude that their American business partners are cold and insensitive. Both challenges can be detrimental to the establishment and maintenance of healthy business relationships.

Short-Term/Long-Term

Comparing to Americans, people with cultural profiles similar to that of France are much more focused on the Long-Term. As a result, in an organization, Americans may find that their recent achievements are not so much valued by their foreign counterparties. When dealing with customers, Americans may be frustrated by the fact that they could not make a sale until proper customer relationship is developed with their foreign counterparties. Lastly, Americans may encounter challenges derived from the difference in risk appetite. This is because Americans are more willing to assume risk to take advantage of a window of opportunity, whereas their foreign counterparties may forgo opportunities to avoid damaging long-term tradition or reputation.

Direct/Indirect

French and American people are both quite Direct. Therefore, there should no major challenge in this cultural aspect.

Individualism/Collectivism

France is an extremely individualist country just like the U.S. Therefore, there should no major challenge in this cultural aspect.

Expressive/Neutral

The French tend to be expressive, whereas Americans are very neutral especially in business settings. Therefore, challenges may arise when Americans and their foreign counterparties engaged in debates. People with cultural profiles similar to that of France may raise their voices and use gesticulation, which Americans may regard as

unprofessional and a lack of self-control. On the other hand, the foreign counterparties may interpret Americans' controlled emotions as indicating a lack of commitment or engagement.

Schedule/Flow

The French have a Flow tendency, whereas Americans are more Schedule-oriented. People with cultural profiles similar to that of France may arrive late to meetings without apologies, and they may not stick to a set schedule while completing projects. These scenarios may irritate Americans, as they may regard such behaviors as unprofessional and impolite.

2. *How could you use the toolkit to analyze and adapt to a new work environment (whether at home or abroad)?*

In the current age of globalization, we are almost guaranteed to work with people from different countries and cultures, whether in the U.S. or abroad. Many of us will even be encouraged by our firms to take international assignments for the sole purpose of gaining cross-cultural experience. The toolkit will allow us to more effectively analyze and adapt to new work environments by equipping us with a method to assess and understand those we will work alongside. By providing cultural context to behavioral observations, the toolkit will allow us to better respond to different communication styles, work processes, and attitudes of future colleagues. In the workplace, such an understanding could help to avoid conflict among coworkers, facilitate more effective collaboration, and even provide the opportunity to take leadership roles within the firm. Ultimately, the toolkit will equip us to become better players within any global organization.

3. *What “transferrable skills” have you gained by doing this project that employers (now or in the future) should know about?*

Diversity Appreciation:

During the project, we had the opportunity to explore and experience French culture. We are able to understand the similarities and differences between us through the project. The understanding of the cultural differences makes us respect and appreciate cultural diversity and also individual differences in people. As the result, we will seek diverse input in a company and have a better understanding of different views.

Flexibility:

After the experience in Paris, we are more adaptable to changes in environment. In a new environment, we conducted activities and work in completely different settings. This allows us to adapt to different situations that we have never encountered. We are more flexible in terms of perceive and react to changing situations. As an employee of the company, we are able to adjust ourselves and maintain our working efficiency and effectiveness under different circumstances.