

Cultural Connections

A light-hearted test of international cultural knowledge



'Cultural Connections' is one of a number of RSVP Design learning activities that uses our 'Learning Loops' methodology to create a card game that checks knowledge of subjects and opens discussions around important topics. As our businesses and networks become more international, there is more need than ever to raise awareness of issues around culture (both national and organisational) and how sensitive we need to be to work effectively in unfamiliar cultures.

'Cultural Connections' is a light-hearted way to introduce discussion and further exploration of cultural diversity. Played individually or, preferably, in small teams, the multiple choice questions stimulate debate around what learners know, or think they know, about other national cultures. It offers an unusual introduction to training around cross-cultural working and diversity issues. It also encourages individual input and contribution: some players may disagree with the answers supplied, leading to a sharing of personal experience and beliefs.

Ann Alder, Consulting Director, RSVP Design Ltd says,

"Enjoy using 'Cultural Connections' and please be aware of some of the potential issues that it will raise!

Whilst we have endeavoured to make the information in this pack as accurate as possible, it is of course 'stereotypical'. Just as we in Glasgow know that not everyone in Scotland wears a kilt and eats deep-fried Mars Bars, so we know that the information in our answers will not apply to everyone in the country concerned, nor to every situation! However, the themes behind the questions do have validity."

Much of the background theory for this game was taken from research work written up in 'Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business' by Fons Trompenhaars and Charles Hampden-Turner, published by Nicholas Brearley Publishing, 1997. Key cultural differentiators, such as our relationship with time, the ways in which we ascribe status and power and the ways in which we build and discriminate between business and social relationships, are reflected in some of the questions.

Other questions reflect more 'stereotypical' views of cultures and may cause more controversy. However, this is intended to trigger discussion: the ways in which individuals react to the questions will provide opportunities for further exploration of diversity issues. If learners are uncomfortable with any of the questions and answers, it allows them to challenge the views that are presented and identify and address much deeper concerns about the ways in which we present, understand and value difference."

To add CULTURAL CONNECTIONS to your resource library:

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