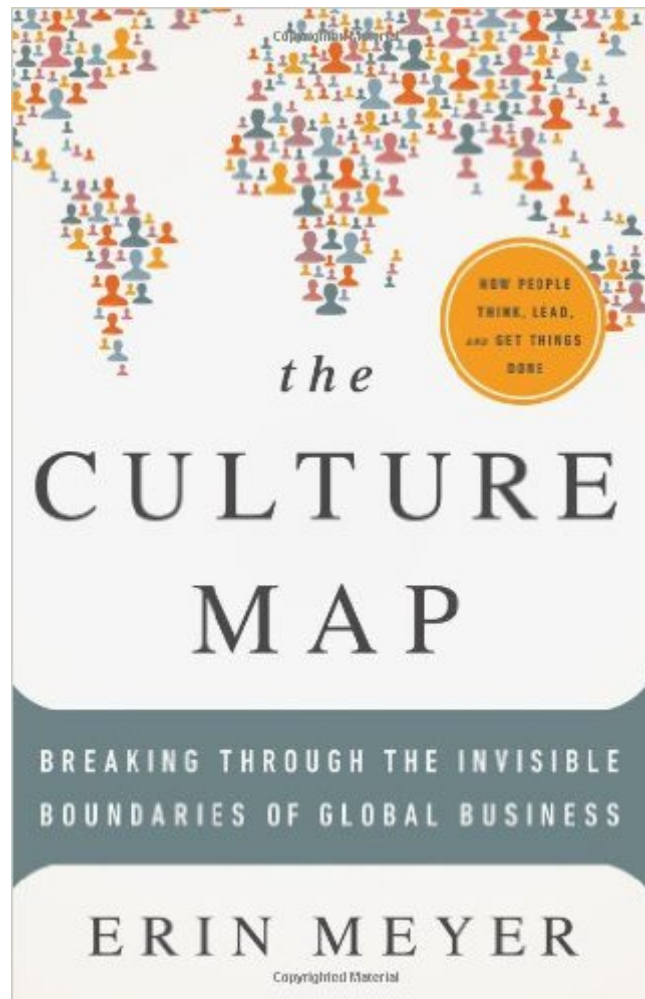


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# The Culture Map: Breaking Through The Invisible Boundaries Of Global Business



## Synopsis

Whether you work in a home office or abroad, business success in our ever more globalized and virtual world requires the skills to navigate through cultural differences and decode cultures foreign to your own. Renowned expert Erin Meyer is your guide through this subtle, sometimes treacherous terrain where people from starkly different backgrounds are expected to work harmoniously together. When you have Americans who preface anything negative with three nice comments; French, Dutch, Israelis, and Germans who get straight to the point ('your presentation was simply awful'); Latin Americans and Asians who are steeped in hierarchy; Scandinavians who think the best boss is just one of the crowd; the result can be, well, sometimes interesting, even funny, but often disastrous. Even with English as a global language, it's easy to fall into cultural traps that endanger careers and sink deals when, say, a Brazilian manager tries to fathom how his Chinese suppliers really get things done, or an American team leader tries to get a handle on the intra-team dynamics between his Russian and Indian team members. In *The Culture Map*, Erin Meyer provides a field-tested model for decoding how cultural differences impact international business. She combines a smart analytical framework with practical, actionable advice for succeeding in a global world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

For decades, authors such as Hall, Hofstede or Trompenaars have dominated the field of intercultural research. The models they presented, commonly referred to as 'cultural dimensions,'

aimed to identify differences across countries and cultures; they are still widely used in cross-cultural education and training around the world. With *The Culture Map*, INSEAD professor Erin Meyer now boldly presents a new and different set of dimensions, a map of eight continua structured along the lines of how people interact: communicating, evaluating, persuading, leading, deciding, trusting, disagreeing, and scheduling. What sets this model apart is its practicality. Where others discuss value differences, Meyer concentrates on resulting behaviors; where others analyze how values manifest themselves, she focuses on strategies for crossing cultural gaps and reconciling different ways of getting things done. All the while, the author strikes an effective balance between oversimplifying and getting carried away with complexity. Meyer uses a wide range of stories, her own and others', to illustrate essential concepts and highlight critical caveats. *The Culture Map* encourages readers to think beyond the obvious. For instance, when discussing levels of directness in communication, Meyer does not stop at warning Westerners of the importance of paying attention to the subtle ways in which messages are commonly worded in Asia, as most authors in the field do, but also emphasizes the 'inverse' risk: those used to highly indirect communication styles may sense "between-the-lines" messages that the sender had no intention of sending. Thankfully, Meyer frequently discusses strategies for working across such cultural differences.

As I began to read this book, I was again reminded of the challenges that the great explorers throughout history faced. Somehow they and their associates broke through what must have been for them invisible boundaries. Today, all manner of companies are struggling to navigate their way through different cultures, overcoming boundaries that had been previously invisible, barriers more numerous and daunting than any that Marco Polo, Christopher Columbus, â Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, and Ferdinand Magellan had encountered. According to Erin Meyer, "I provide a systematic step-by-step approach to understanding the most common business communication challenges that arise from cultural differences, and offer steps for dealing with them more effectively." She recommends and explains several strategies to increase her reader's effectiveness when addressing issues and resolving problems caused by cross-cultural misunderstandings, if not avoid them altogether. Meyer shares her thoughts about how to achieve these strategic objectives:

- o How to communicate effectively across cultures
- o How to evaluate individual performance
- o How to evaluate organizational performance (i.e.

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