Diversity
AT WORK
LANGUAGE SOLUTIONS

NORQUEST COLLEGE

ONLINE SIMULATIONS

Independent Learner & Instructor Guide

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Diversity at Work: Online Simulation Activities, undertaken by the Center for Intercultural Education at NorQuest College has benefitted from the support and commitment of a number of individuals and organizations. Their dedication to this project has resulted in resources that guide users in exploring, understanding and enhancing effective communication skills. These resources are intended to support skilled newcomers to successfully negotiate speech acts and build communication skills.

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INTRODUCTION TO ONLINE SIMULATIONS

Simulation is a technique for practicing and learning. These three online simulations were created to support learner's capacity to make effective decisions in workplace communication. They give learners opportunities to build decision-making skills within simulated 'real' environments without the anxiety of learning on the job.

The simulations focus on diverse characters in communication in situations that come up when responding to 1) leadership requests, 2) leadership feedback and 3) onboarding. Through these characters, learners are introduced to communication misunderstandings. They are asked to make choices to help the characters overcome misunderstandings to achieve workplace goals.

For each choice point, there will be a best response based on the character's goal, language ability and cultural competence. For each response, learners will be given the opportunity to follow the implications of that choice, i.e. to follow the scenario along so they can experience the outcomes in the scenario. In this way simulations are a platform which provides a tool in learning to mitigate tension and resolve practical dilemmas.

Practicing the scenarios with choice points and feedback can enhance learner's performance and help reduce errors. At times the options available to the character may seem limited or not the best response. Learners may need to be reminded at these times that the options were created as realistic ones for the characters. Learner's understanding will be deepened if the activity is followed by debriefing discussions where they can discuss these choice points.

To assist in debriefing we have created options to handle the decisions differently. They provide information for each choice point in the simulations and answer the question, 'What does the learner need to know right now to support an appropriate, effective decision in the Canadian workplace?' (In the debriefing, after learners complete the simulation, they can have the opportunity to act as themselves and think about their own perspectives – inside the situation but outside of the characters' points of view.) The options include Canadian pragmatic patterns for responding to requests, feedback, complaints and making apologies. They also include effective communication practices, cultural orientations and soft skills as they relate to behavior at the choice points.

A Learner Handout and an Instructor Lesson Plan for the scenario, *Responding to Leadership Request,* were created based on developing intercultural communicative competence skills and can be used as stand-alone or as exemplars for creating learner and lesson plans for the other two scenarios.

INFORMATION FOR INDEPENDENT LEARNERS

Try the ONLINE SIMULATION ACTIVITIES in this order:

1. Responding to Leadership Request
2. Responding to Leadership Feedback
3. Responding to Onboarding

Keep in mind the simulation activities give you a chance to step outside your environment and usual way of thinking to engage with differences.

Be prepared at the decision points to feel a jolt to:

- what you claim to know
- how you feel and
- what you can or are unable to do

Reflect on the distance[1] that the differences create and what you want to do next. Do you want to?

- maintain the distance
- try to understand and interpret the distance
- encounter the distance as a valid perspective[2]

Access further information

- To make sense of the choice points - debrief with Options to Handle the Decisions Differently.
- To check new words, idiomatic words and phrases - use the Glossary.[3]

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[1] Distance means the feeling of encountering differences that feel distant to what you feel is normal. This could be different behaviors, different expectations, different values.

[2] A concept of global mindedness: Andreotti, Biesta, Ahenakew 2014

[3] Glossary is found at www.norquest.ca/interculturalsimulations

INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTORS

Introduce the ONLINE SIMULATION ACTIVITIES in this order:

1. Responding to Leadership Request
2. Responding to Leadership Feedback
3. Responding to Onboarding

Keep in mind the simulations use action logic to create opportunities for learners to step outside their environment and usual way of thinking to engage with differences.

Be prepared that they might feel a jolt to:

- what they claim to know (cognitive)
- how they are disposed to feel (affective) and
- what they are enabled or unable to do (performative)

Facilitate knowing that learners might respond in three different ways:

- maintain the distance (objectivism) or
- understand and interpret the distance (relativism) or
- encounter the distance as valid (pluralism)[4]

Access further information

- Lesson Plan for Responding to Leadership Requests
- Learner Handout for Responding to Leadership Requests
- Checklist for connecting activities with ES/CLB/LINC frames[5]
- Debrief the choice points with: Options to Handle this Differently
- Practice further with: Pragmatic Activity Card[6]

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[4] A concept of global mindedness: Andreotti, Biesta, Ahenakew 2014
[5] Checklist is found at www.norquest.ca/interculturalsimulations
[6] Practice card is found at www.norquest.ca/interculturalsimulations

LEARNER HANDOUT: RESPONDING TO LEADERSHIP REQUEST

PART 1: OPENING QUESTION:

Have you found you have more than one way to communicate to get what you want?

Answer: *Yes*   *No*

PART 2: RESPONDING TO WORKPLACE REQUESTS

Instructions:

1. Read the workplace situation.
2. Read the question.
3. Write your answer.

Workplace Situation:

You work as an engineer in the Canadian workplace.

You wrote a report and sent it to your supervisor for approval.

He sent back comments and suggestions and asked you to take a look and let him know if anything is unclear.

He met with you and said, "Let's make it spotless."

Question: What will you do next?

Answer: _____

_____

PART 3: THE SIMULATION ACTIVITY: RESPONDING TO LEADERSHIP REQUEST

1. Work through the simulation without interventions as part of the group.
2. Notice how the characters make and respond to requests.
3. Circle any of the decision points below that you would like to discuss later.

Decision Points:

1	1	1
1 a	1b	1c
1a1 **1a2** **1a3**	**1b1** **1b2** **1b3**	**1c1** **1c2** **1c3**

PART 4: UNDERSTANDING THE WORKPLACE SITUATION

What is Roger's goal in the following statement or actions?

Answer questions 1- 5 by choosing the best answers from a - e.

1. "I've gone over your report and I used 'track changes' to highlight all my comments and suggestions. Take a look and let me know if you have any questions or if anything's unclear." ___

2. "Let's make it spotless". ___

3. Closing the door. ___

4. "So…what happened?" ___

5. "Why would I go through all the trouble of making all those suggestions if I didn't want you to take them seriously?" ___

Choose an answer from the following a-e:

a. Securing privacy to provide feedback.

b. Requesting changes.

c. Requesting perfection.

d. Expressing frustration.

e. Requesting an explanation.

PART 5: COMMUNICATION STYLES

On the line mark the level of directness of the two characters.

Use an 'R' for Roger and an 'M' Mariana.

Are their communication styles similar or different?

_____

Direct   Indirect

PART 6: CULTURAL AWARENESS

a. Participate in a debrief regarding the decision points you circled in Part 3.

b. Go back to your answer in Part 2: What will you do next?

Question: Is there anything you would add or change now that you've completed the online simulation activity?

Answer: _____

_____

_____

Share your answer.

PART 7: DEBRIEF DISCUSSION

Discussion Questions:

- What behaviour helped Mariana achieve her goal?
- What behaviour created problems for Mariana to achieve her goal?
- What behaviours can you suggest for Mariana to better achieve her goal?
- What is one thing you learned about communication in Canada?

LESSON PLAN:
RESPONDING TO LEADERSHIP REQUEST

LEARNING OUTCOMES[7]	**By the end of the lesson, learners will be able to:** • Understand and prepare for responding effectively and appropriately to a request in a Canadian workplace • Notice verbal and non-verbal communication styles • Notice direct and indirect communication styles • Articulate behaviors that enable goals to be achieved	Total time: 1.5-2 hours

LESSON STAGE	LESSON FLOW AND OBJECTIVES	CORRESPONDING PART IN LEARNER HANDOUT	TIME
1. PRE-ASSESSMENT	**In this part of the lesson, learners are asked to reflect on their experience in communication.** • Ask learners to answer the question by circling Yes or No. Then find out how many learners answered yes or no as a big group.	Part 1	5 mins
2. WARM UP	**In this part of the lesson, learners are introduced to a workplace situation that will be the central focus of the lesson.** • Ask learners to write their answers to the question. • Tell learners they will revisit this in Part 6	Part 2	10 mins

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[7] The learning outcomes for this lesson are based on suggested pragmatics teaching approaches in the following article: Yates, L. (2004). The 'secret rules of language': Tackling pragmatics in the classroom. Prospect, 19(1), 3-21 as well as the lesson plan in the following article: Nguyen, T. T. M., & Basturkmen, H. (2010). Teaching constructive critical feedback. In D.H. Tatsuki, & N. R. Houck (Eds.), Pragmatics: Teaching speech acts (pp. 125-140). Aledandria, VA: TESOL.

LESSON STAGE	LESSON FLOW AND OBJECTIVES	CORRESPONDING PART IN LEARNER HANDOUT	TIME
3. PRESENTATION	**In this part of the lesson, learners go through an Online Simulation Activity together as a class.** • Display the Simulation Activity through a projector onto a screen. • Explain the task is to make decisions for the character, Mariana to respond the best way she can to a request in a Canadian workplace. • Explain that choices learners would make for themselves might not be available for the character, Mariana in the story. • Explain it's important to be open and curious to go through the story and learn from feedback Mariana receives. • Start the Simulation Activity and continue until you get to the first decision point. • At each decision point, have learners discuss their answers in pairs/small groups. Then ask what they chose. Don't ask why. Select the majority choice. Then go to the next slide for feedback. • If learners want to discuss the decision and feedback, ask them to hold their thoughts and circle the decision point. Explain it's important to go through the story before getting side-tracked in discussions. • They will have time to discuss the circled decision points in Part 6a.	Part 3	50 mins
4. EXPLANATIONS	**In this part of the lesson, learners discuss why certain things happen in communication.** • Read the 5 sentences. Ask learners to choose an answer from a-e. • Discuss their answers. Answer key: 1-b, 2-c, 3-a, 4-e, 5-d	Part 4	5 mins

LESSON STAGE	LESSON FLOW AND OBJECTIVES	CORRESPONDING PART IN LEARNER HANDOUT	TIME
5. AWARENESS-RAISING	In this part of the lesson, learners identify Roger and Mariana's directness and indirectness in their communication. Have learners write an R for Roger and M for Mariana. • Explain the meaning of Direct and Indirect • Check their answers. <table><tr><td>**Marianna's style - Direct**</td><td>**Roger's style - Indirect**</td></tr><tr><td>I say what I mean. People state what they think.</td><td>I soften what I mean. People suggest and imply.</td></tr></table>	Part 5	5 mins
6. CULTURAL AWARENESS	a. In this part of the lesson learners participate in an instructor lead debrief of the decision points circled on Learner Handout Part 3. • Debrief these decision points using the Debrief with Options to Handle the Decisions Differently (p. 12). • Give learners the opportunity to act as themselves and think about their own perspectives, i.e. what would they do in the situation and context but outside of the character's point of view. b. In this part of the lesson, learners revisit their answers in Part 2 to see if there was a difference after the Simulation Activity. • Ask learners to look back at the workplace situation on page 1. • Ask them if they want to add or change their answers now that they've gone through the online simulation activities.	Part 6	20 mins
7. DISCUSSION	In this part of the lesson, learners answer the questions to reinforce their understanding of responding to leadership feedback. • Ask learners to answer the questions. • Facilitate discussions.	Part 7	10-15 mins
8. ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY	As a take-home task or an in-class assignment use the, What Would You Say? Intercultural Activity Card, to assess learner uptake.		

DEBRIEF WITH OPTIONS TO HANDLE DECISIONS DIFFERENTLY

DECISION POINTS: RESPONDING TO LEADERSHIP REQUEST

If Marianna and Roger can hold the space open to connect with what has happened and notice their responses then they can take steps to make sense by becoming more informed.

Information to support options to handle the decisions differently at each of the decision points in the activity:

Decision Points:

1	1	1
1a	1b	1c
1a1 **1a2** **1a3**	**1b1** **1b2** **1b3**	**1c1** **1c2** **1c3**

DECISION POINT 1

Make sense by being aware of different communication styles.

Marianna's style - Direct	Roger's style - Indirect
I say what I mean.	I soften what I mean.
People state what they think.	People suggest and imply.

DECISION POINT 1a

Make sense by understanding this **Canadian Pragmatic Pattern For Requests.**

CONTEXT CONFIRMATION REQUEST FUTURE STATEMENT AGREEMENT THANKS

Reference Pragmatic Patterns for Business

DECISION POINT 1a1
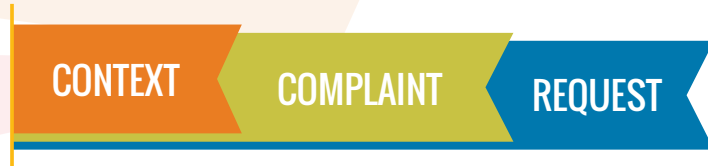
Make sense by noticing differences that may matter in teamwork.

Marianna's style - Multi-active	Roger's style - Linear/reactive
People oriented	Task oriented
Displays feelings, emotions	Avoids displaying emotions

Reference Hamerich & Lewis

DECISION POINT 1a2

Roger sets up the context for a complaint but Mariana doesn't notice.

Make sense by understanding this **Canadian Pragmatic Pattern For Complaints.**

CONTEXT	COMPLAINT	REQUEST

Reference Pragmatic Patterns for Business

DECISION POINT 1a3

Make sense by building skills in communicating effectively.

Clarify the meaning implied in the statement "not great unfortunately".

Make sense by noticing differences that may matter in teamwork.

Mariana's orientation - Multi-active	Roger's orientation - Linear/reactive
People oriented	Job oriented

Reference Lewis R.D.

DECISION POINT 1b

Make sense by building skills in communicating effectively.

Check to ensure they have attached the same meaning to Roger's request.
Clarify to ensure a mutually agreed way to proceed.

DECISION POINT 1b1

Make sense by building skills in communicating effectively.

Check the meaning of Roger's future statement.
Clarify to ensure a mutually agreed way to proceed.

DECISION POINT 1b2

Make sense by being aware of different communication styles.

Mariana's style - Emotionally attached	Roger's style - Emotionally detached
Personal stake in outcome.	Ability to weigh all factors.
Emotion conveys you care.	Act calm and objectively.

DECISION POINT 1b3

Great Work!

Make sense by building skills in communicating effectively.

Check to ensure they have attached the same meaning to the question.
Clarify to achieve a satisfactory mutual understanding.

DECISION POINT 1c

Make sense by understanding this **Canadian Pragmatic Pattern For Requests.**

CONTEXT ▸ CONFIRMATION ▸ REQUEST ▸ FUTURE STATEMENT ▸ AGREEMENT ▸ THANKS

Reference Pragmatic Patterns for Business

DECISION POINT 1c1

Make sense by building skills in communicating effectively.

"Did you even look at my comments and suggestions" means Roger's original request has now become a complaint and can be understood to mean "Why didn't you make the changes?"

Make sense by understanding this **Canadian Pragmatic Pattern For Complaints.**

CONTEXT ▸ EXPLAIN THE PROBLEM ▸ REQUEST

Reference Pragmatic Patterns for Business

DECISION POINT 1c2

Make sense by building skills in communicating effectively.

Check to ensure they have attached the same understanding of the message.
Clarify to achieve a satisfactory mutual understanding of the response needed.

DECISION POINT 1c3

Because Roger has implied that Mariana didn't respond effectively to his original request and now there is a big problem, Mariana needs to make an apology. Make sense by using this **Canadian Pragmatic Pattern For Apology.**

APOLOGY → TAKE RESPONSIBILITY → EXPLANATION → OFFER OF REPAIR → PROMISE FOR THE FUTURE

Reference Pragmatic Patterns for Business

DEBRIEF WITH OPTIONS TO HANDLE DECISIONS DIFFERENTLY

DECISION POINTS: RESPONDING TO LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK

If Bo and George can hold the space open to connect with what has happened and notice their responses then they can take steps to make sense by becoming more informed.

Information to support options to handle the decisions differently at each of the decision points in the story:

Decision Points:

1	1	1
1 a	1b	1c
1a1 1a2 1a3	**1b1 1b2 1b3**	**1c1 1c2 1c3**

DECISION POINT 1

Make sense by being aware that feelings of uncertainty are common in new situations.

DECISION POINT 1a

Make sense by understanding it's okay to ask a boss for information. Asking for information upline is acceptable.

DECISION POINT 1a1

Make sense by using this Canadian pattern of feedback.

SET THE CONTEXT → EXPLAIN THE PROBLEM → GIVE ADVICE → GIVE A POSITIVE FUTURE STATEMENT → PLAN A FUTURE CHECK IN

Reference Pragmatic Patterns for Business

DECISION POINT 1a2

Make sense by building skills in communicating effectively.

Notice possible misunderstandings
Seek clarification
Choose effective ways of communicating

DECISION POINT 1a3

Make sense by sharing perspectives on power distance and on accomplishing tasks.

Perspective Bo shares	Orientations	Perspective George shares
I should respect my boss for the positions he holds in this company and follow his directions. Keeping harmony is a way to accomplish tasks.	Power Distance and Hierarchy Accomplishing Tasks	I am comfortable with a flatter chain of command and want to hear good ideas from my team. Focusing on results is a way to accomplish tasks.

DECISION POINT 1b

DECISION POINT 1b1

Make sense by sharing perspectives

Perspective Bo shares	Orientations	Perspective George shares
A boss won't confront a team member in public: a boss will be polite and indirect to save face. Keeping harmony is my way to accomplish tasks.	Confrontation Accomplishing tasks	I confront my team with logic. To fit in here you need to speak up. I try to be direct. Focusing on results is the way I get things done.

DECISION POINT 1b2

Make sense by demonstrating willingness to invest in language learning.

Build confidence in ability to use English clearly at work.
Build confidence in ability to use English spontaneously at work.
Provide opportunities for motivated employees to build communication skills.

DECISION POINT 1b3

Make sense by building skills in communicating effectively.

Check to ensure they have attached the same meaning to the question.
Clarify to achieve a satisfactory mutual understanding.

DECISION POINT 1c Good Choice

DECISION POINT 1c1

Make sense by building skills in communicating effectively.

Check to ensure they have attached the same meaning to the message.
Clarify to achieve a satisfactory mutual understanding of the message.

DECISION POINT 1c2

Make sense by building skills in communicating effectively.

Check to ensure they have attached the same understanding of the message.
Clarify to achieve a satisfactory mutual understanding of the response needed.

DECISION POINT 1c3 Good Choice

DEBRIEF WITH OPTIONS TO HANDLE DECISIONS DIFFERENTLY

DECISION POINTS: RESPONDING TO LEADERSHIP REQUESTS WHEN ONBOARDING

If Arun and his managers can hold the space open to connect with what has happened and notice their first responses then they can take steps to make sense by becoming more informed.

Information which will provide an option to handle the decisions differently at each of the decision points in the story:

Decision Points:

1	1	1
1 a	1b	1c
1a1 1a2 1a3	**1b1 1b2 1b3**	**1c1 1c2 1c3**

DECISION POINT 1

Make sense by noticing different communication styles.

Arun - Indirect	Roger - Direct
I soften what is meant.	I say what is meant.
I suggest and imply.	I state what is thought.
I keep enthusiasm low.	I keep enthusiasm high.
I am passive and slightly cautious.	I am assertive and bold.

DECISION POINT 1a

Make sense by becoming aware of differences in power distances and workplace levels of decision making.

Arun's - High power distance	Roger's - Low power distance
Power distance between decision-makers and team members is high. Decisions are made by people at the top of an organization and acted on by team members reporting to the decision-makers.	Power distance between decision-makers and team members is low. Participation is invited by all team members to discuss decisions. Decisions are confirmed by decision-makers and acted on by team members.

Make sense by understanding even though hierarchy is lower there is still a process for decision making and responsibility. Generally in Canadian companies a team member with a problem should first go to their team manager, next to HR, and finally to a more senior team manager.
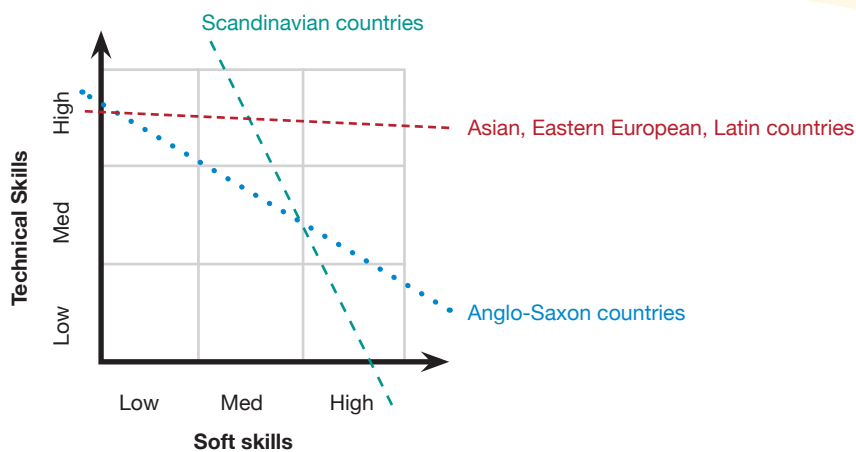
DECISION POINT 1a1

Make sense by understanding this **Canadian Pragmatic Pattern for Requests.**

CONTEXT CONFIRMATION REQUEST FUTURE STATEMENT AGREEMENT THANKS

Reference Pragmatic Patterns for Business

DECISION POINT 1a2

Make sense by noticing 'differences that may matter in teamwork' and the relative importance of soft skills.

"The more hierarchical the country or culture, the more flat lines of equal value to the organization will be. For example, being a good leader in Russia requires, first and foremost, strong technical skills; good soft skills are a bonus, but it does not make a major difference. In Anglo-Saxon countries (which are mildly hierarchical), soft skills matter significantly more than in hierarchical countries, because you cannot force employees to do what you want them to do just because you said so and you are the leader. In these countries, the ability to work well with people is more important." (Laroche, L., http://www.cpi-hamilton.ca/relative_importance.htmlat)
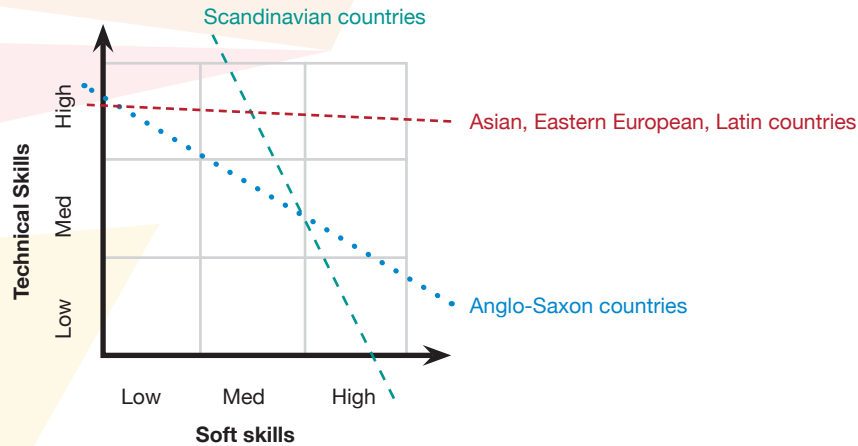
DECISION POINT 1a3

Good choice

Make sense by understanding differences in power distance and taking initiative.

Arun's style - Higher power distance	Roger's style - Lower power distance
Initiative is not necessary.	Initiative is highly valued.
Subordinates wait for instructions.	Subordinates dislike being micro-managed.

DECISION POINT 1a3 A

Make sense by noticing differences that matter in onboarding and the importance of demonstrating soft skills and technical skills during onboarding to a Canadian company.

"The more hierarchical the country or culture, the more flat lines of equal value to the organization will be. For example, being a good leader in Russia requires, first and foremost, strong technical skills; good soft skills are a bonus, but it does not make a major difference. In Anglo-Saxon countries (which are mildly hierarchical), soft skills matter significantly more than in hierarchical countries, because you cannot force employees to do what you want them to do just because you said so and you are the leader. In these countries, the ability to work well with people is more important." Laroche, L., http://www.cpi-hamilton.ca/relative_importance.htmlat

DECISION POINT 1a3 B

Make sense by understanding differences in power distance and taking initiative.

Arun's style - Higher power distance	Roger's style - Lower power distance
Initiative is not necessary.	Initiative is highly valued.
Subordinates wait for instructions.	Subordinates dislike being micro-managed.

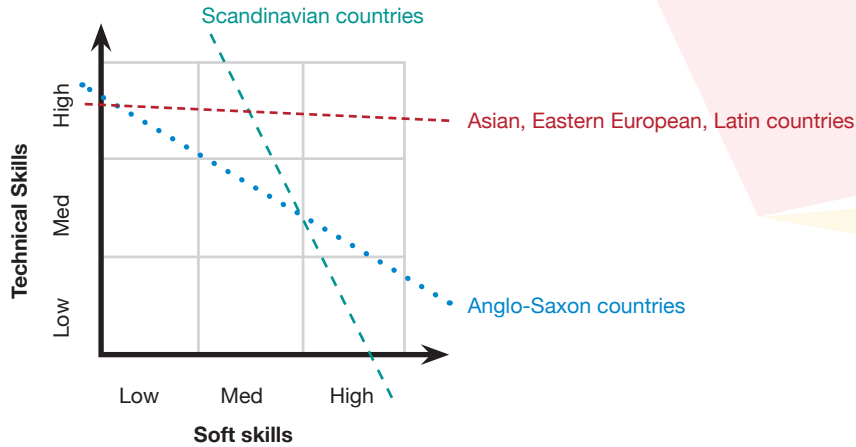**Canadian Pragmatic pattern for Complaints**

Reference Pragmatic Patterns for Business

DECISION POINT 1b

Make sense by understanding even though hierarchy is lower in Canada there is still a process for decision making and a line of responsibility. Generally in Canadian companies a team member with a problem should first go to team manager, next to HR, and finally to a more senior team manager.

Make sense by noticing differences that may matter in teamwork and the relative importance of soft skills.

"The more hierarchical the country or culture, the more flat lines of equal value to the organization will be. For example, being a good leader in Russia requires, first and foremost, strong technical skills; good soft skills are a bonus, but it does not make a major difference. In Anglo-Saxon countries (which are mildly hierarchical), soft skills matter significantly more than in hierarchical countries, because you cannot force employees to do what you want them to do just because you said so and you are the leader. In these countries, the ability to work well with people is more important." Reference online http://www.cpi-hamilton.ca/relative_importance.htmlat

DECISION POINT 1b1

Make sense by being aware of differences in intercultural core competencies and blind spots that affect behavior.

Arun's blind spot	Janet's blind spot
I see one way to onboard – my way.	I expect Arun to fit in and follow my onboarding process. I think it's really better.

Reference: Critical Incidents for Intercultural Communication in the Workplace Scene by Scene Breakdown p.49

DECISION POINT 1b2

Make sense by understanding differences in power distance.

Arun's style - Higher power distance	Janet's style - Lower power distance
Initiative is not necessary.	Initiative is highly valued.
Subordinates wait for instructions.	Subordinates dislike being micro-managed.

Arun may still assume it's just a matter of time for waiting for instructions – not understanding that he will have to demonstrate soft skills. Janet may assume that Arun will demonstrate his willingness to follow her process of onboarding.

DECISION POINT 1c

Make sense by understanding even though power distance is lower in Canada there is still a process for decision making and a line of responsibility. Generally in Canadian companies a team member with a problem should first go to team manager, next to HR, and finally to a more senior team manager.

DECISION POINT 1c1

Make sense by understanding this **Canadian Pragmatic Pattern for Complaints.**

CONTEXT ▸ **EXPLAIN THE PROBLEM** ▸ **REQUEST**

Reference Pragmatic Patterns for Business

Arun may assume that surely a senior manager will be able to fix this 'mistake'. Janet may assume that because she has talked with Arun he will accept her response to his request.

Arun's style - Higher power distance	Janet's style - Lower power distance
Initiative is not necessary.	Initiative is highly valued.
Subordinates wait for instructions.	Subordinates dislike being micro-managed.

Blind Spot affecting behavior

Arun's blind spot	George's blind spot
Arun knows one way to onboard – his way of being assigned 'worthy' tasks.	George knows his company protocol and process and expects Arun will fit into it.

DECISION POINT 1c2

Make sense by checking and clarifying understanding.

Check to ensure they have attached the same understanding to the message.
Clarify to achieve a satisfactory mutual understanding of the response needed.

Make Sense by being willing to consider the other's perspective.
Make Sense by understanding there is more than 1 way to accomplish tasks.

Arun's Perspective	George's Perspective
Arun focuses on why he isn't successful from his own perspective.	George focuses on why Arun isn't successful from his own perspective.
That is, "I'm ok so I'm not getting tasks due to Roger's problem."	That is, "He's not getting the tasks because he hasn't proven he can fit in yet."

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