

## Self-Assessment

### Cultural Intelligence

#### Chapter Resource

Please refer to section [11.4 Culture](#) of *Psychology, Communication, and the Canadian Workplace*

One of the latest buzz-words in the business world is “cultural intelligence,” which was initially introduced to the scholarly community in 2003 by P. Christopher Earley and Soon Ang. In the past decade, a wealth of research has been conducted examining the importance of cultural intelligence during interpersonal interactions with people from other cultures. **Cultural intelligence (CQ)** is defined as an “individual’s capability to function effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity”(Earley & Ang, 2008).

#### Four Factors of Cultural Intelligence

In their original study on the topic, Earley and Ang argued that cultural intelligence is based on four distinct factors: cognitive, motivational, metacognitive, and behavioral dimensions. Before continuing, take a minute and complete the Cultural Intelligence Questionnaire in the table below:

#### Instructions

Read the following questions and select the answer that corresponds with your perception. Do not be concerned if some of the items appear similar. Please use the scale below to rate the degree to which each statement applies to you.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. When I’m interacting with someone from a differing culture, I know when I use my knowledge of that person’s culture during my interactions.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. When I interact with someone from a culture I know nothing about, I have no problem adjusting my perspective of their culture while we talk.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. During intercultural interactions, I am well aware of the cultural knowledge I utilize.



- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I always check my knowledge of someone from another culture to ensure that my understanding of their culture is accurate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. During my intercultural interactions, I try to be mindful of how my perceptions of someone's culture are either consistent with or differ from reality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I pride myself on knowing a lot about other people's cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I understand the social, economic, and political systems of other cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I know about other cultures' religious beliefs and values.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I understand how daily life is enacted in other cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I know the importance of paintings, literature, and other forms of art in other cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I enjoy reaching out and engaging in an intercultural encounter.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I would have no problem socializing with people from a new culture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Although intercultural encounters often involve stress, I don't mind the stress because meeting people from new cultures makes it worth it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I would have no problems accustoming myself to the routines of another culture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I enjoy being with people from other cultures and getting to know them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I know how to interact verbally with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I know how to interact nonverbally with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. I can vary my rate of speech if an intercultural encounter requires it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. I can easily alter my behaviors to suit the needs of an intercultural encounter.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. I can alter my facial expressions if an intercultural encounter requires it.



**Scoring:**

Add items 1-5 (Intercultural Understanding) = \_\_\_\_\_

Add items 6-10 (Intercultural Knowledge) = \_\_\_\_\_

Add items 7-15 (Intercultural Motivation) = \_\_\_\_\_

Add items 16-20 (Intercultural Behavior) = \_\_\_\_\_

**Interpreting Your Scores:**

Scores for each of the four factors (intercultural understanding, intercultural knowledge, intercultural motivation, and intercultural behavior) can be added together to get a composite score. Each of the four factors exists on a continuum from 5 (not culturally intelligent) to 25 (highly culturally intelligent). An average person would score between 12-18.

**Cognitive CQ**

First, cognitive CQ involves knowing about different cultures (intercultural knowledge). Many types of knowledge about a culture can be relevant during an intercultural interaction: rules and norms, economic and legal systems, cultural values and beliefs, the importance of art within a society, etc.... All of these different areas of knowledge involve facts that can help you understand people from different cultures. For example, in most of the United States, when you are talking to someone, eye contact is very important. You may have even been told by someone to “look at me when I’m talking to you” if you’ve ever gotten in trouble. However, this isn’t consistent across different cultures at all. Hispanic, Asian, Middle Eastern, and Native American cultures often view direct contact when talking to someone superior as a sign of disrespect. Knowing how eye contact functions across cultures can help you know more about how to interact with people from various cultures.

**Motivational CQ**

Second, we have motivational CQ, or the degree to which an individual desires to engage in intercultural interactions and can easily adapt to different cultural environments. Motivation is the key to effective intercultural interactions. You can have all the knowledge in the world, but if you are not motivated to have successful intercultural interactions, you will not have them.

**Metacognitive CQ**

Third, metacognitive CQ involves being consciously aware of your intercultural interactions in a manner that helps you have more effective interpersonal experiences with people from differing cultures (intercultural understanding). All of the knowledge about cultural differences in the world will not be beneficial if you cannot use that information to understand and adapt your behavior during an interpersonal interaction



with someone from a differing culture. As such, we must always be learning about cultures but also be ready to adjust our knowledge about people and their cultures through our interactions with them.

### **Behavioral CQ**

Lastly, behavioral CQ is the next step following metacognitive CQ, which is behaving in a manner that is consistent with what you know about other cultures (Ang & VanDyne, 2008). We should never expect others to adjust to us culturally. Instead, culturally intelligent people realize that it's best to adapt our behaviors (verbally and nonverbally) to bridge the gap between people culturally. When we go out of our way to be culturally intelligent, we will encourage others to do so as well.

As you can see, becoming a truly culturally intelligent person involves a lot of work. As such, it's important to spend time and build your cultural intelligence if you are going to be an effective communicator in today's world.

### *References*

This assessment was adapted from:

[Chapter 6: Cultural and Environmental Factors in Interpersonal Communication](#) in [Interpersonal Communication](#) by Jason S. Wrench; Narissra M. Punyanunt-Carter; and Katherine S. Thweatt is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#), except where otherwise noted.

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