Networking in the U.S. Context

What, When, Where, Why, and How

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Networking in the US Context

Today's Presentation

1. Why and when we network
2. Practical strategies for networking
3. Professional relationships in the US

Mentimeter Poll: What words come to mind when you think about networking?

1. Go to: https://www.menti.com
2. Enter code: 9765 5430
3. Answer the poll

Networking in the US Context

If you don't like networking, you might have some good reasons...

1. **Networking inequities.** *Some are born with networking advantages while others lack this social capital.*

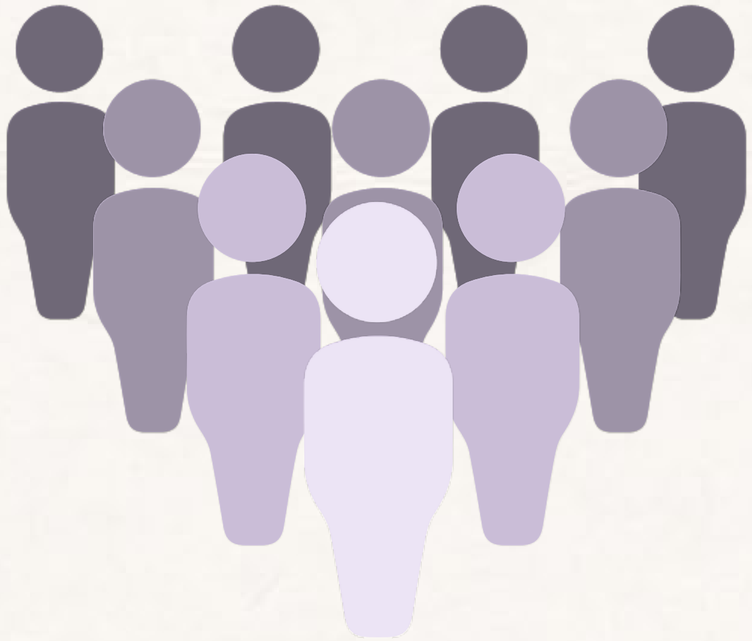
2. **Inauthenticity.** *We've all met people who reach out only because they want something.*

3. **Social anxiety.** *It is genuinely difficult to put yourself out there, meet new people, and ask for advice.*

... but you can network in your own style and work to change some of these realities!

Networking in the US Context

Networking



"Research shows that **70%** of all jobs are not published publicly on jobs sites and as much as **80%** of jobs are filled through personal and professional connections." -CNBC

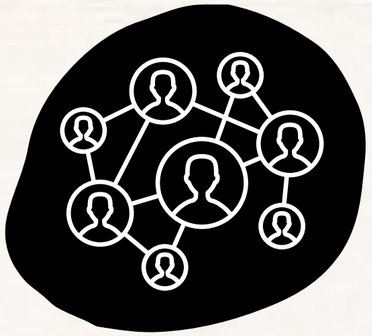
Source: https://www.cnbc.com/2019/12/27/how-to-get-a-job-often-comes-down-to-one-elite-personal-asset.html

Networking is part of the entire career development process!

1. Self -assessment
2. Career exploration
3. Strategizing
4. Securing opportunities

Practical strategies for networking

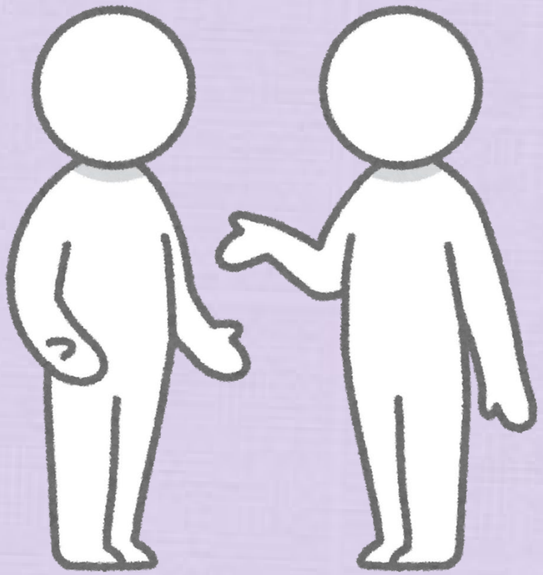
Introducing yourself



Finding connections

Informational interviews

“Half -Life Your Message”



Partner Activity!

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Introducing yourself

Two frameworks

Present

Who you are, what you do, and where you do it

Past

What got you to where you are now?

Future

What do you want to be. what do you want to do, where do you want to go?

Skills

Who are you and what are some of your best skills?

Passions

What elements of your work are the most exciting?

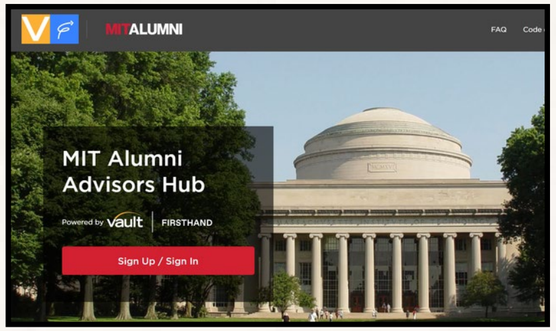
Future

What do you want to be. what do you want to do, where do you want to go?

Networking in the US Context

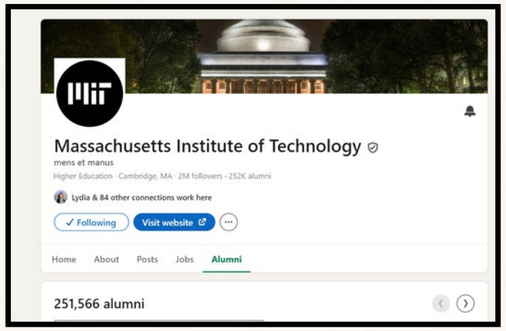
Building your network

Alumni Advisors Hub



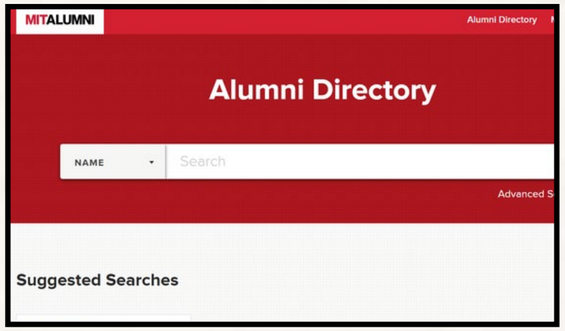
Book appointments with alumni who volunteer to help students.

MIT's LinkedIn Page



Use keywords to find alumni with relevant interests or experience

Alumni Directory



Find contact info to connect with MIT alumni of interest

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Informational interviews

1. Identify people to talk with
2. Send an introductory email
3. Do some background research and develop questions
4. Conduct the interview

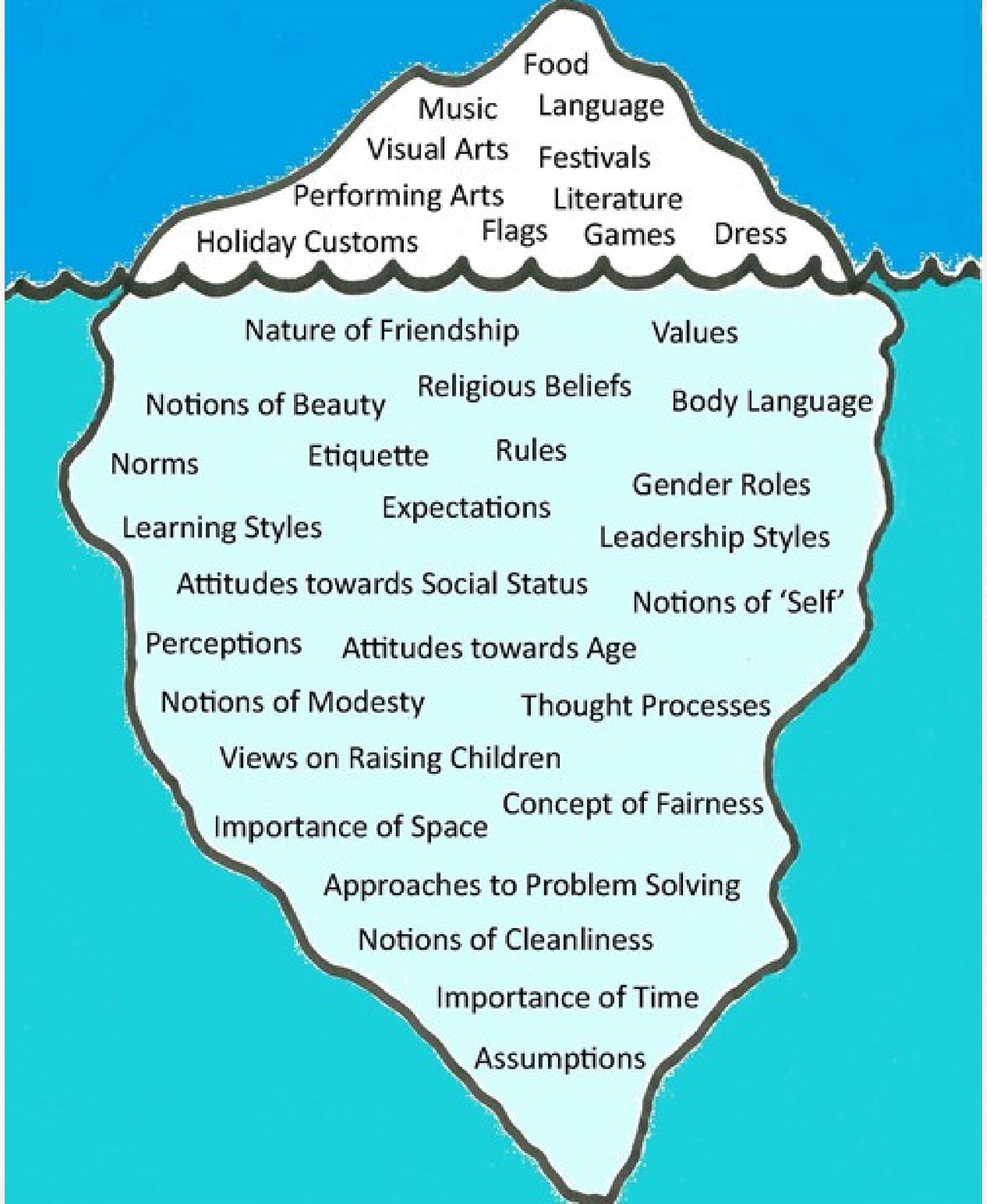
Don’t forget to send a thank you note after the conversation!

Networking in the US Context

Cultural considerations for networking in the U.S.

Networking in the US Context

Culture: Above & Below



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Professional Relationships in the US

1. Cold Calling/Cold Emailing is acceptable, as well as putting yourself out there professionally

2. Americans love talking about themselves and are generally generous with their time

3. You are not considered bragging when you talk about your accomplishments. Americans grew up with "Show and Tell" in grade school and are used to sharing facts about themselves.

Professional Relationships in the US- The Informational Interview

1. Ask questions about their journey, not just their position or company

2. “Should I pay for the coffee?” Be gracious and offer to buy; if Americans say 'no' it means no.

3. Do not ask for a job (just like you would never ask if a company sponsors work visas). Balance information gathering with communicating you're interested in a job; you're showing interest in their experience and advice

Professional Relationships in the US- Networking

1. Networking is making professional friends

2. Ask for referrals. Consider the difference between “Will you introduce me to your colleagues?” and “If I wanted to meet other people at your company, how would you suggest I do that?”

3. Maintain your networking relationships. Give and don't just take. Follow up with suggestions for articles or events that are relevant to your network

Professional Relationships in the US - Communication

1. Spectrum of Communication: Direct vs. Indirect

2. *Americans don't like silence, so they fill it in with conversation (small talk)

3. Small talk is a vital part of American culture; need to be able to talk about topics other than work (but stay away from taboo topics such as politics and religion)

Professional Relationships in the US - 6 aspects of American Culture

1. Individuality
2. Value of Time
3. Work Ethic
4. Value personal space in public space
5. Professional attire and personal hygiene
6. How to address people you don't know well: Mr. or Ms. or Professor....First name ok?

Source

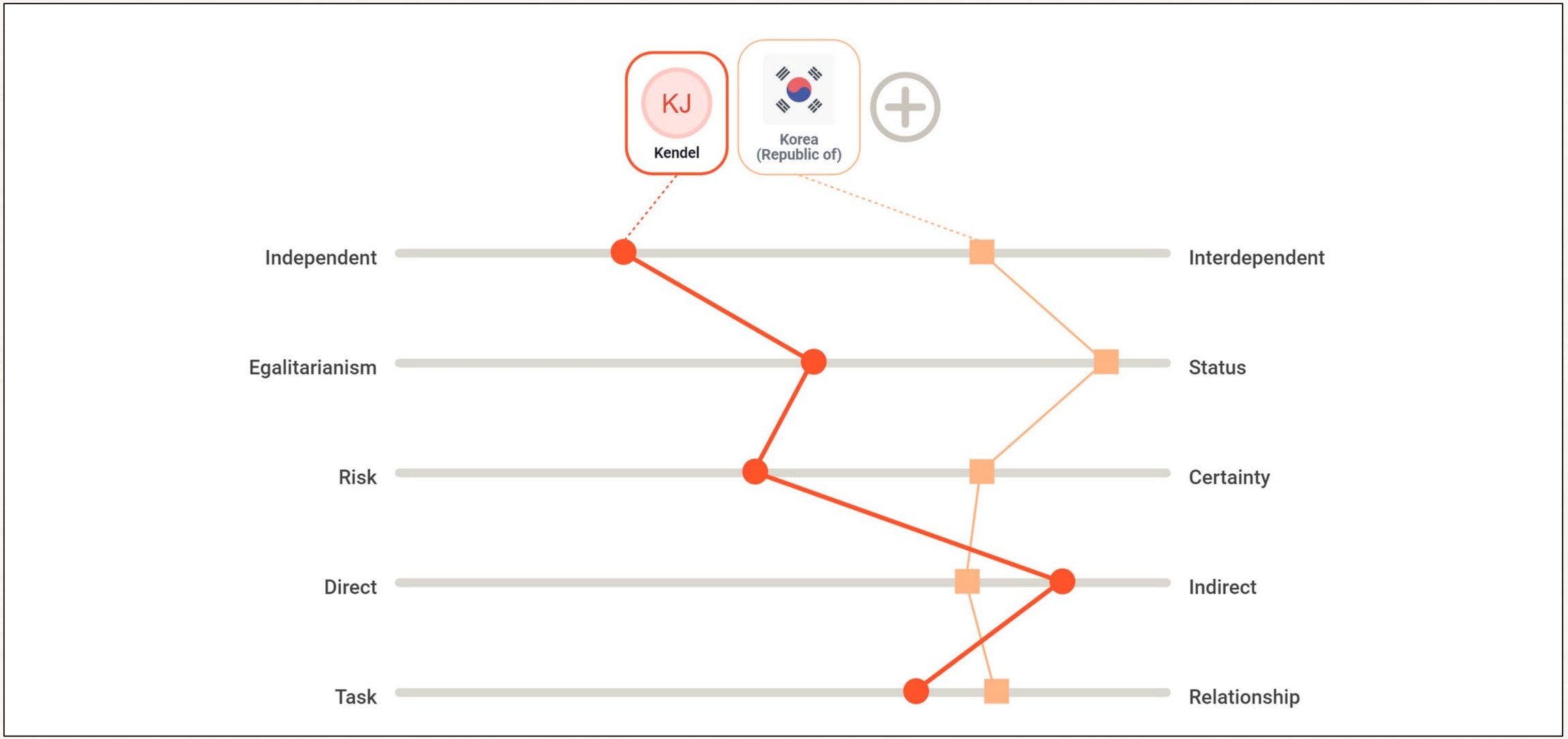
Networking at MIT

- Addressing professors: Mr./Ms. vs. Professor/Doctor...first name?
- Utilize Office Hours (a time when professors are available to meet with students)
- Interact with people outside of your department
- Volunteer for leadership roles
- MIT Network: Alumni Advisors Hub, Alumni Directory & LinkedIn

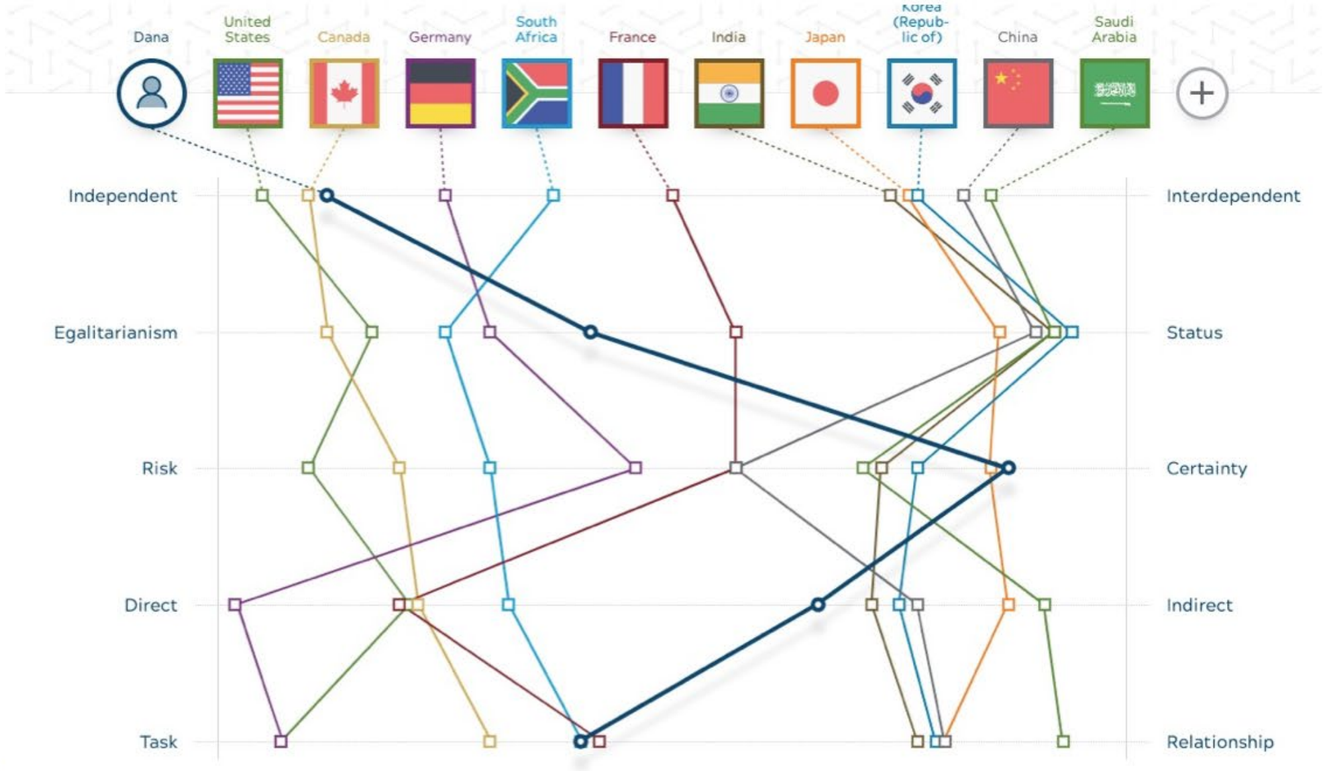
GlobeSmart: Dimensions of Culture

1. Independent vs. Interdependent
2. Egalitarian vs. Hierarchical
3. Certainty vs. Risk
4. Task vs. Relationship
5. Direct vs. Indirect

Take the GlobeSmart quiz:
https://globalsupport.mit.edu/


KJ
Kendel
Korea
(Republic of)
Independent
Interdependent
Egalitarianism
Status
Risk
Certainty
Direct
Indirect
Task
Relationship

GlobeSmart Profile Comparisons



MIT ISO

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS OFFICE

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Placement of points on each dimension for the selected group are based on the median of the data collected and are not intended as a definitive statement about any group or individual.

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Next Steps

1) Take the GlobeSmart Profile

https://globalsupport.mit.edu/

2) Practice Your Elevator Pitch

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