# Introductions

**Share where you are joining us from (in the chat)**

# Learning from Multi-cultural UX (Research) Experiences

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May 2023

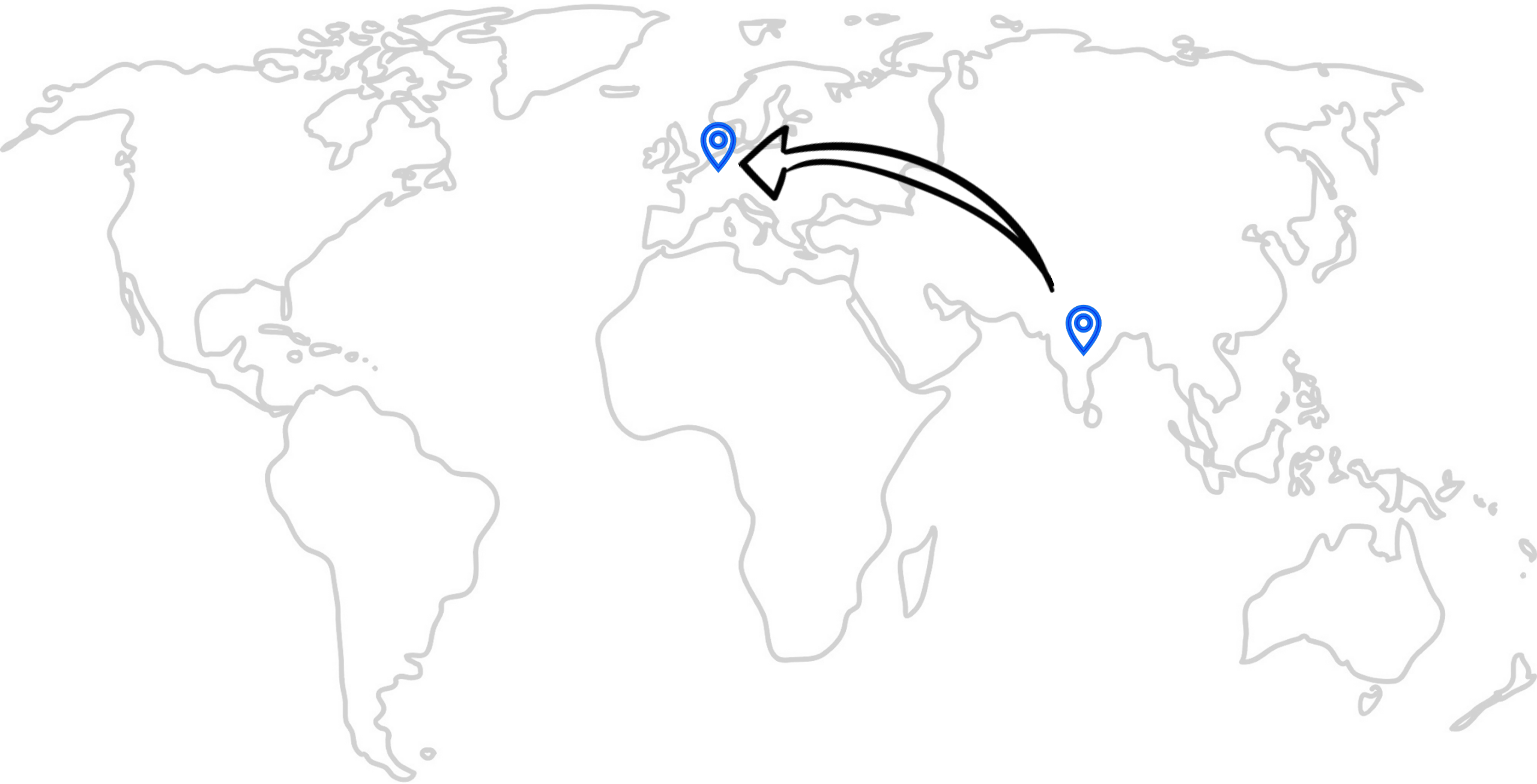**mx mendix**
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- Our work revolves around people and communication

- Share my learnings and experiences

- Bring awareness and provide a moment for reflection

# Key takeaways of the session

- How to apply Hofstede's and Erin Meyer's frameworks about cultural differences

- How to navigate some common situations

- Tools and resources to dive further

# Diversity alone doesn't lead to inclusion.

# Contributing to an inclusive workplace



G.E.M

Gender
Equity
at Mendix

Contributing to an inclusive workplace

> "One might even be seen as the diversity hire. This means that this person has to continuously work to be perceived as more than the token hire.

Farai Madzima

> " (quotation mark)

# A single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete."

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

# Ugh that's so weird!

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Something that is "normal" in your culture but might not be so in other cultures.

# What does this mean for us?

# During research, we find out about context and character.

# However, culture is often missed out
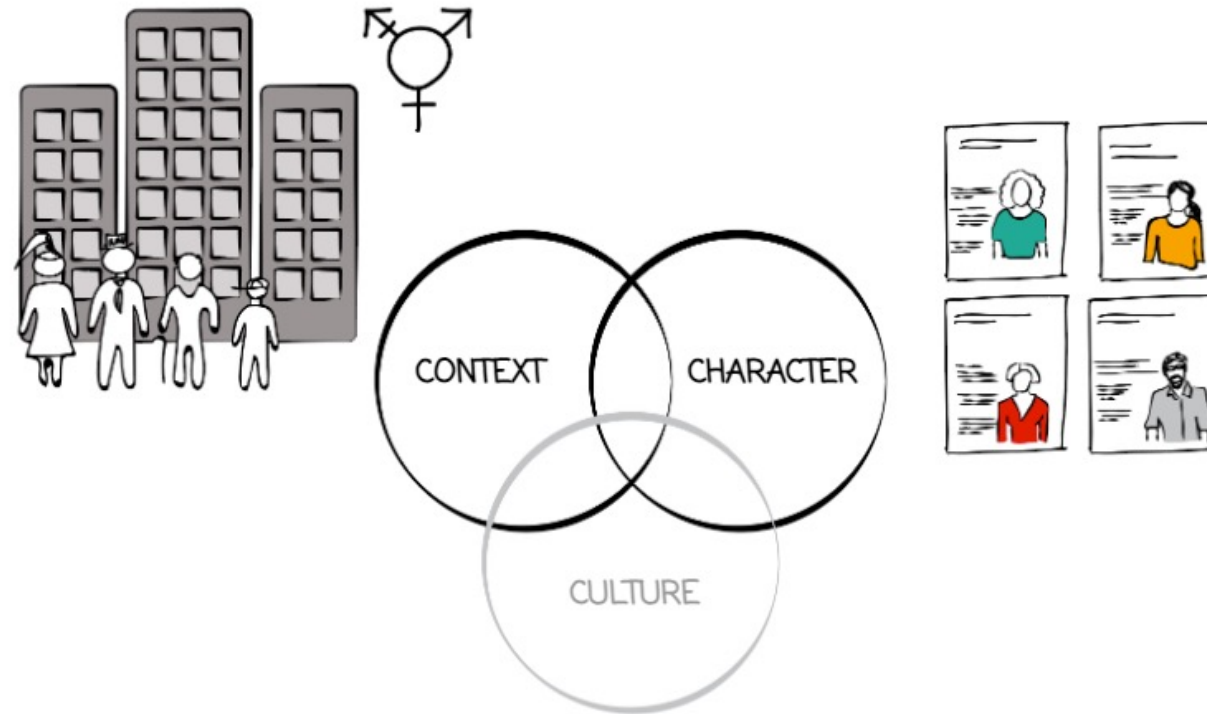
# Today let's focus on this aspect



CONTEXT

CHARACTER

CULTURE

# Storytime!

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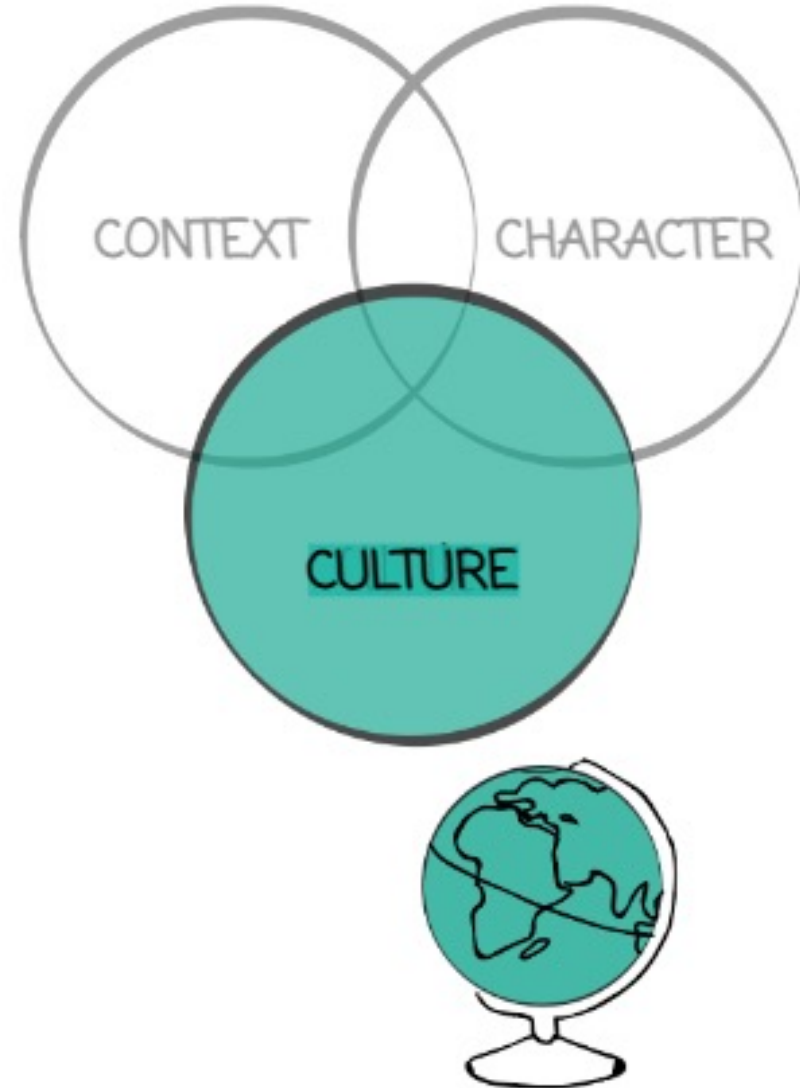
**Typical UX Research Process**

Define objectives & research questions

Define Research methods

Recruit Participants

Conduct the research

Synthesize

Communicate insights
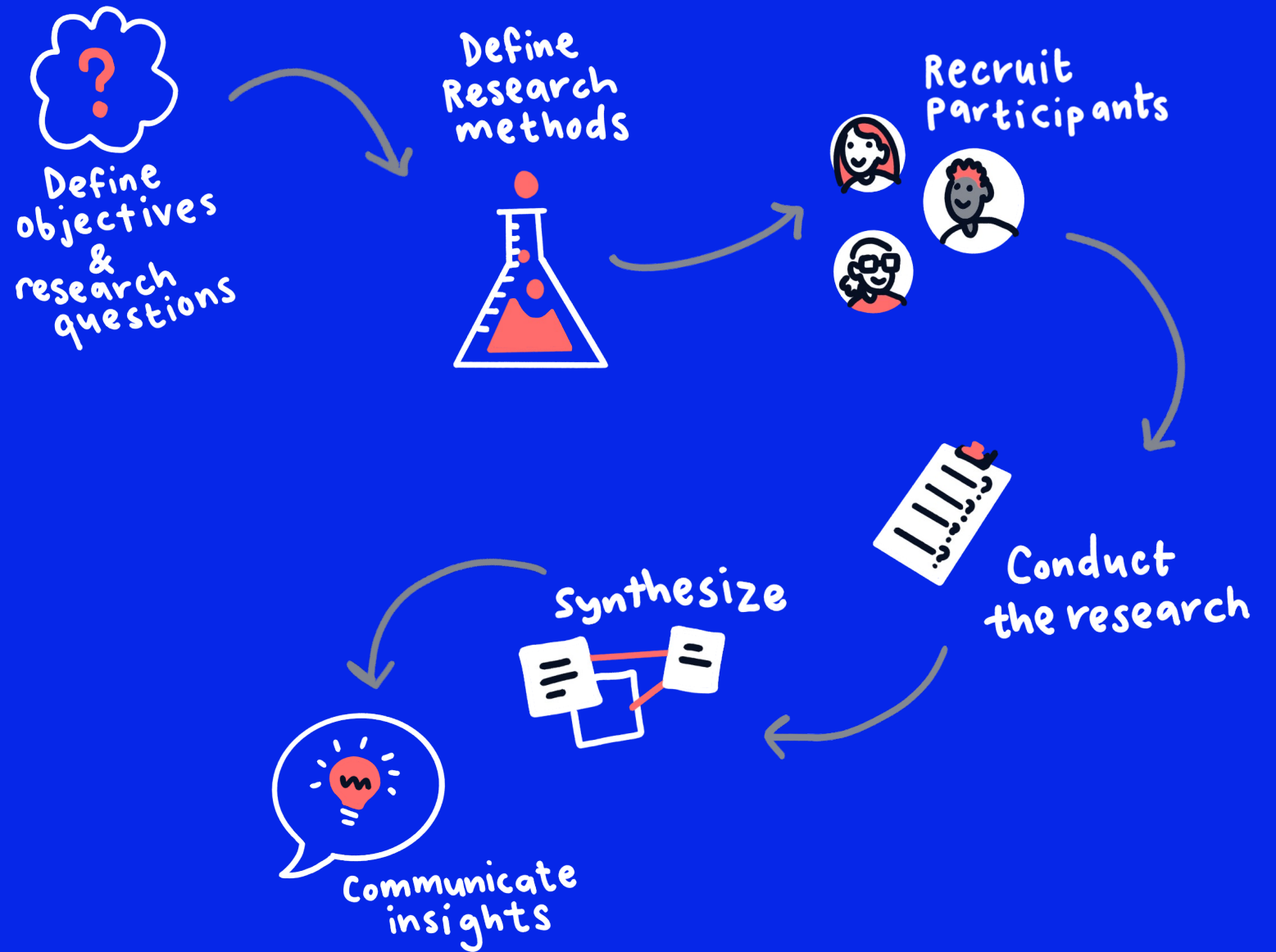
01

**Introductions
during interviews**

Conduct
the research

EXCLUDED

# What I learnt



India ×  Netherlands ×

| Dimension | India | Netherlands |
|---|---|---|
| Power Distance | 77 | 38 |
| Individualism | 48 | 80 |
| Masculinity | 56 | 14 |
| Uncertainty Avoidance | 40 | 53 |
| Long Term Orientation | 51 | 67 |
| Indulgence | 26 | 68 |
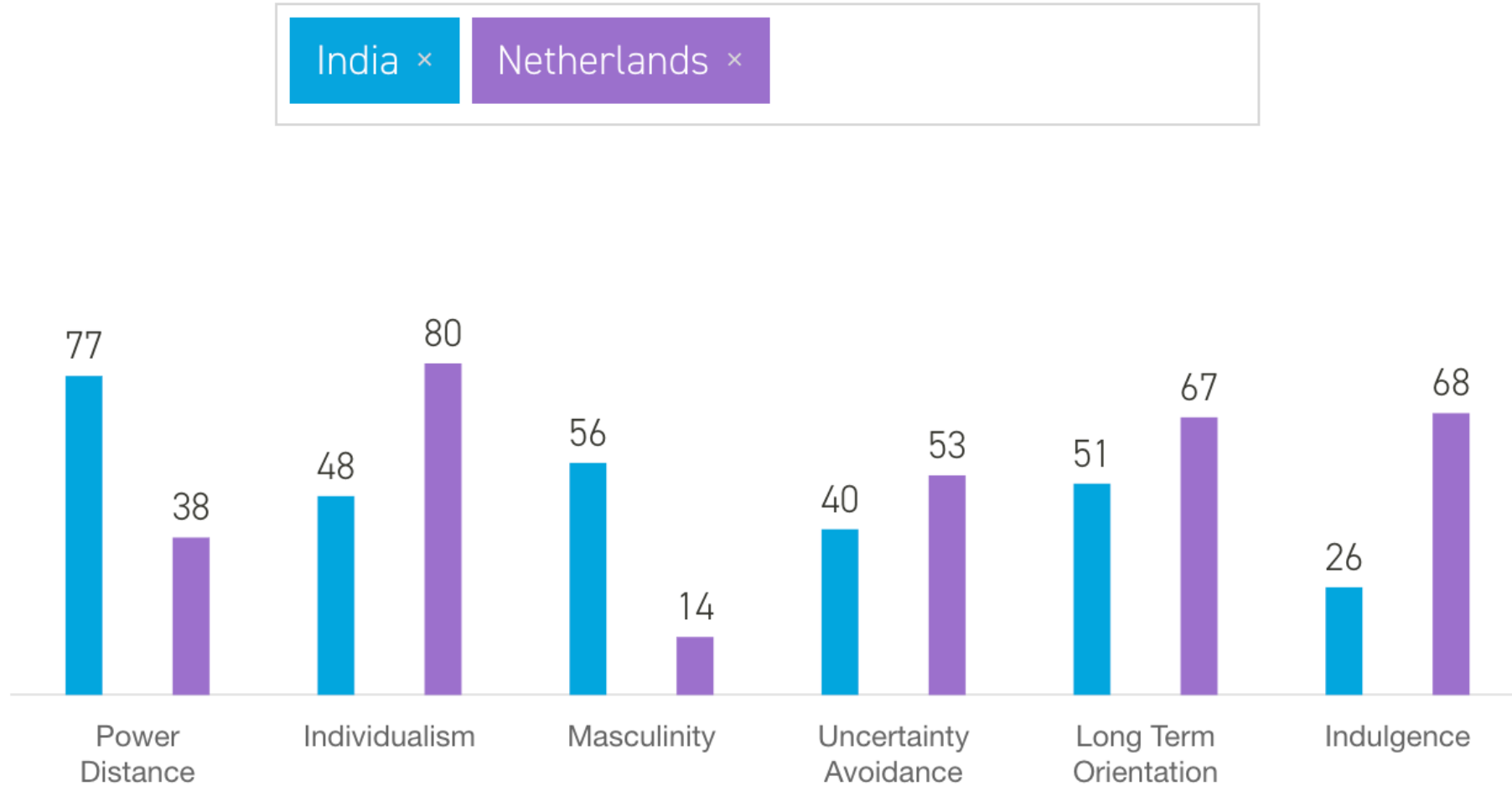
Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

# What I learnt
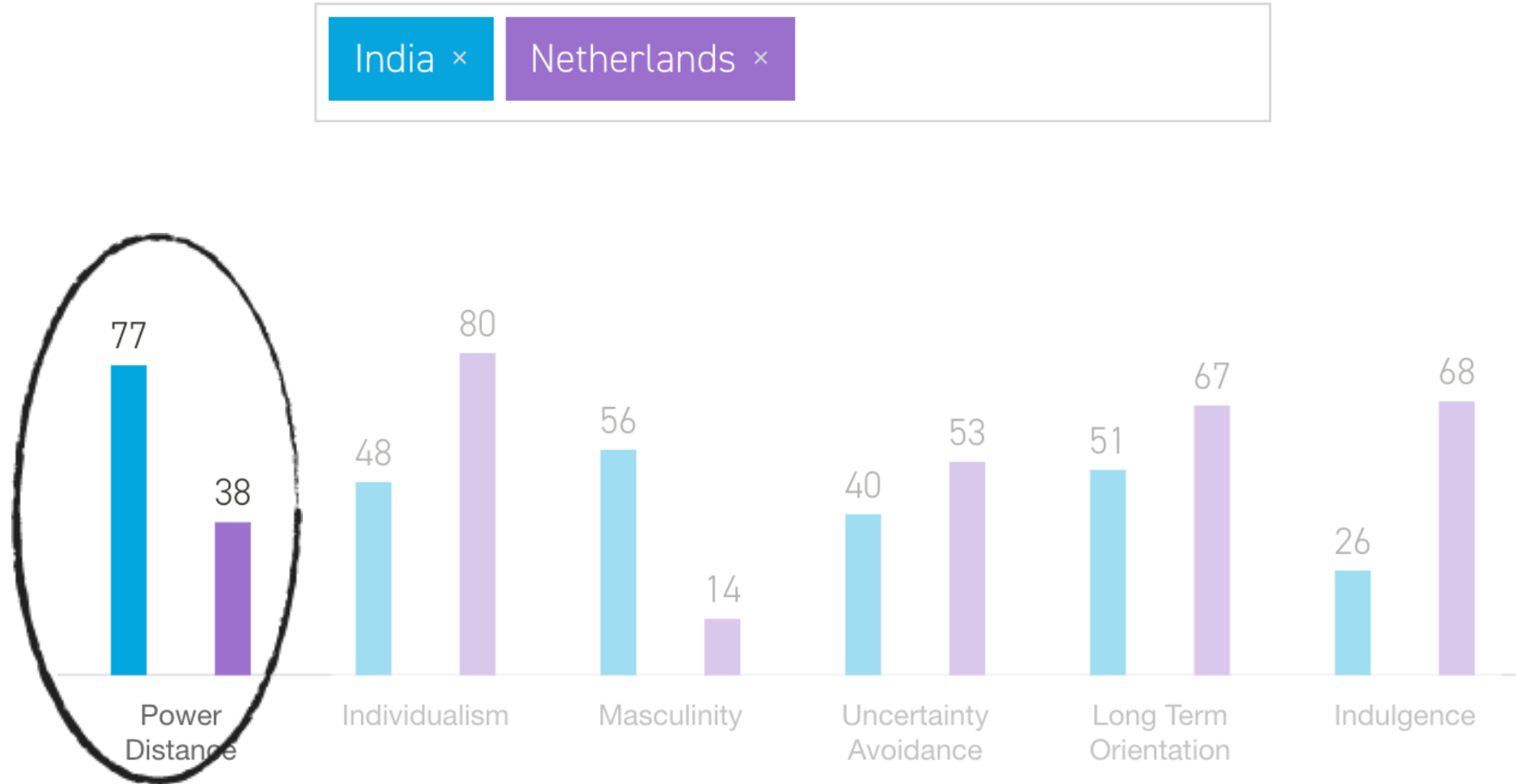


Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

# Study on Hofstede's Dimensions by Annemiek van Boeijen



Figure 3.16 Cultural profiles: nations (left) and i.do students grouped by country (right)

Hofstede's dimensions are not a personality test but a reflection of a full culture independent of context and personality.

# How you can approach

- Who is in the room and what's the culture of the setting?

- What factors are influencing the dynamics?

- How to ensure people feel involved?

# 02

# Sequence of slides

# What I learnt

## FIGURE 3.1. PERSUADING

Why ← | → How

| Italy France | Russia Spain | Germany | Argentina Brazil | Sweden Mexico | Netherlands Denmark | UK | Australia Canada | US |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Latin European | | Germanic | Latin European | | Nordic European | | Anglo-Saxon | |

**Concept-first** ......................................................................... **Application-first**
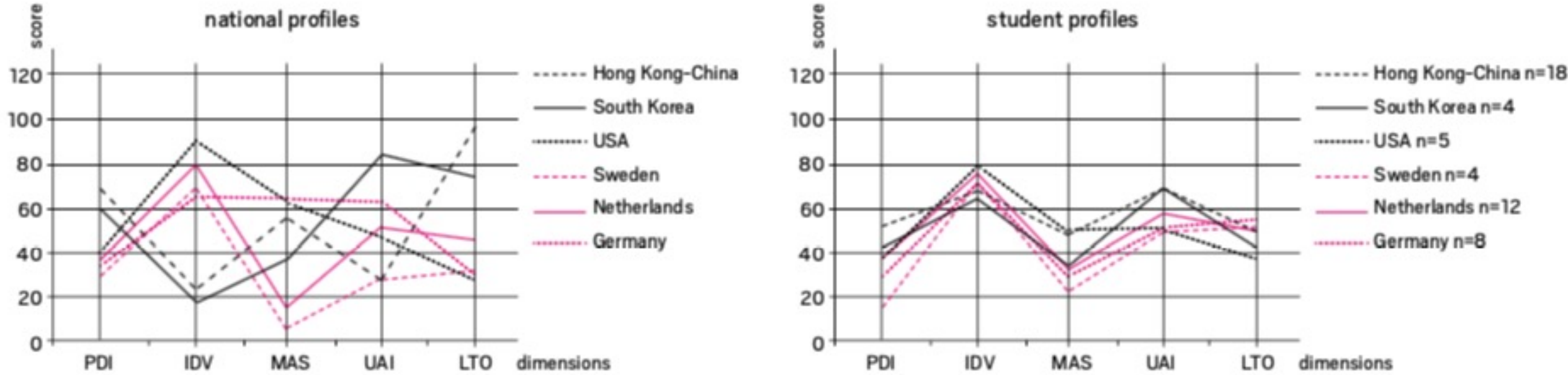
| Concept-first | Individuals have been trained to first develop the theory or complex concept before presenting a fact, statement, or opinion. The preference is to begin a message or report by building up a theoretical argument before moving on to a conclusion. The conceptual principles underlying each situation are valued. |
| --- | --- |
| Application-first | Individuals are trained to begin with a fact, statement, or opinion and later add concepts to back up or explain the conclusion as necessary. The preference is to begin a message or report with an executive summary or bullet points. Discussions are approached in a practical, concrete manner. Theoretical or philosophical discussions are avoided in a business environment. |

# What I learnt

**1. Communication**
   Low-context ........................................ High-context

**2. Evaluating**
   Direct negative ................................... Indirect negative
   feedback                                                                  feedback

**3. Persuading**
   Concept-first ...................................... Applications-first

**4. Leading**
   Egalitarian .......................................... Hierarchical

**5. Deciding**
   Consensual ......................................... Top-down

**6. Trusting**
   Task-based ......................................... Relationship-
                                                                               based

**7. Disagreeing**
   Confrontational ................................... Avoids
                                                                               confrontation

**8. Scheduling**
   Linear time ........................................ Flexible time

—DES DEARLOVE and STUART CRAINER, founders of Thinkers50

THE
CULTURE
MAP

DECODING HOW PEOPLE THINK,
LEAD, AND GET THINGS DONE
ACROSS CULTURES

ERIN MEYER
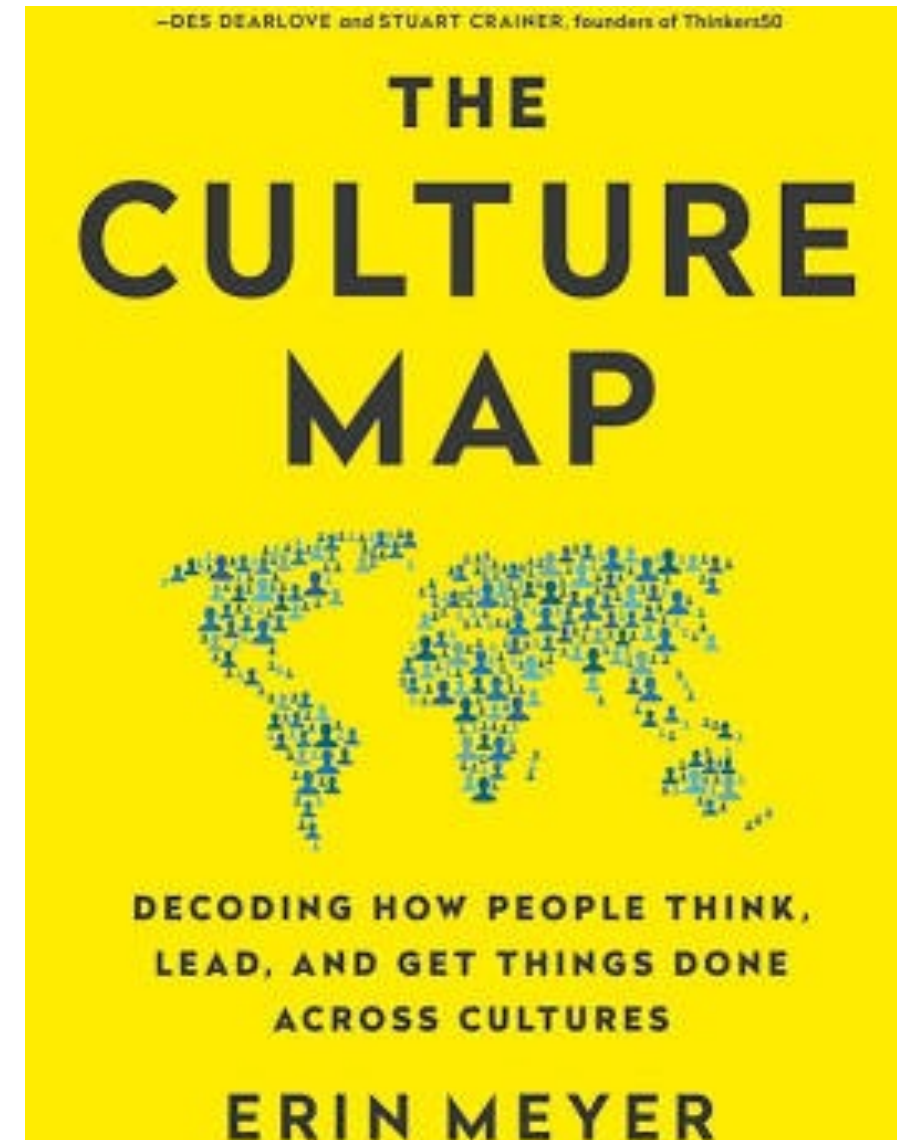
# How you can approach

- Who is the audience and why are they attending your presentation?

- What's your default style? What works for you?

- Can you share some information beforehand?

03

# Feedback and communication styles

# What I learnt

## FIGURE 1.1. COMMUNICATING

US    Netherlands    Finland    Spain Italy Singapore Iran   China Japan
Australia Germany Denmark Poland Brazil Mexico France India Kenya Korea
Canada    UK    Argentina   Russia Saudi Arabia Indonesia

← ———————————————————————————— →

**Low Context**    **High Context**

**Low Context**  Good communication is precise, simple, and clear. Messages are expressed and understood at face falue. Repetition is appreciated if it helps clarify the communication.
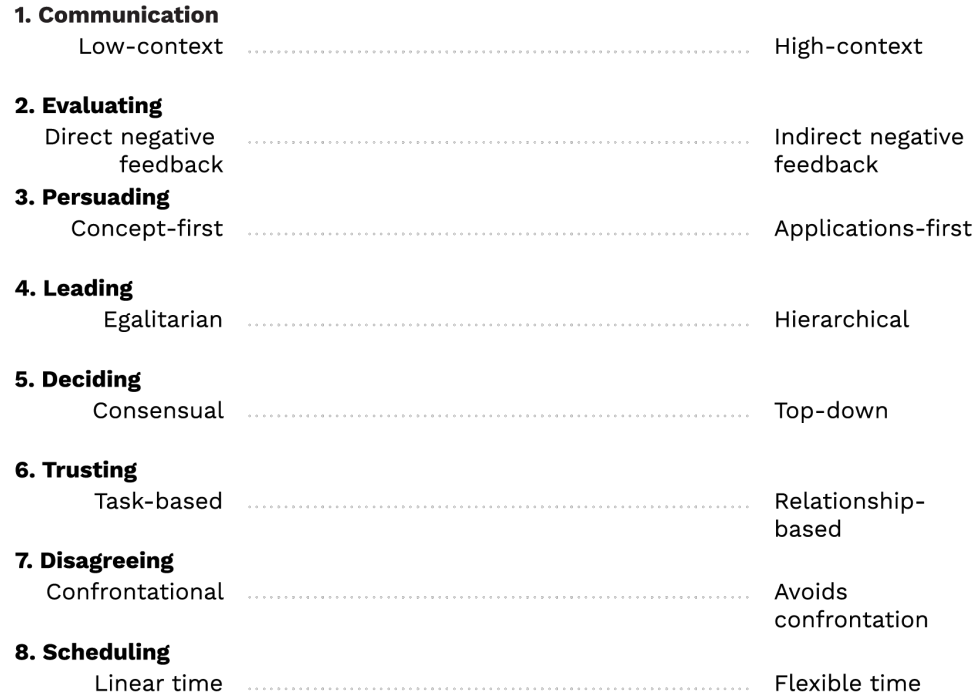
**High Context**  Good communication is sophisticated, nuanced, and layered. Messages are both spoken and read between the lines. Messages are often implied but not plainly expressed.
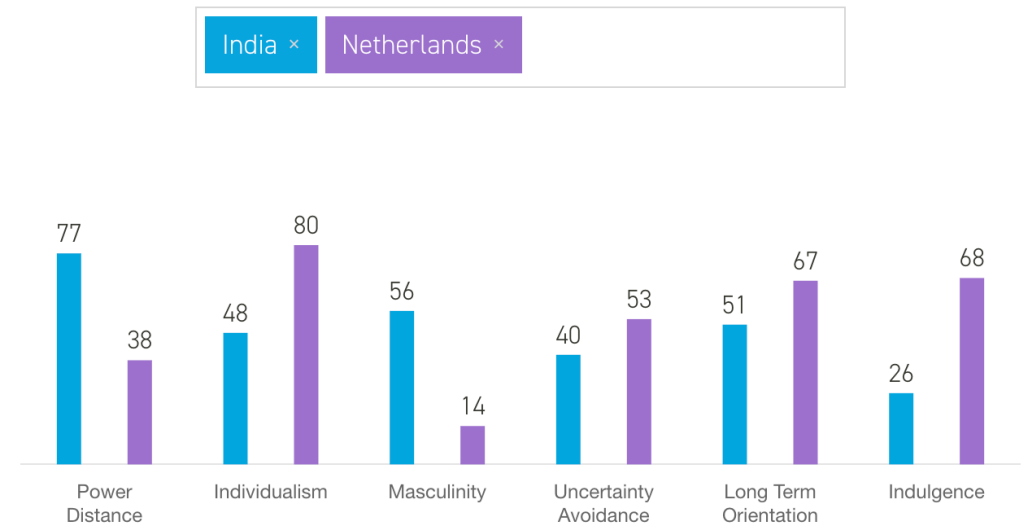
# How you can approach

- Who else is present, formal vs informal, relationship with the person

- Be clear on preference for feedback mode

- Be specific about what you need feedback on

# My thoughts on these frameworks

**1. Communication**

Low-context ............................................ High-context

**2. Evaluating**

Direct negative .................................. Indirect negative
feedback                                                    feedback

**3. Persuading**

Concept-first .................................... Applications-first

**4. Leading**

Egalitarian ............................................ Hierarchical

**5. Deciding**

Consensual ............................................ Top-down

**6. Trusting**

Task-based ............................................ Relationship-
                                                               based

**7. Disagreeing**

Confrontational ........................................ Avoids
                                                       confrontation

**8. Scheduling**

Linear time ........................................... Flexible time

Erin Meyer's Culture Map

| India × | Netherlands × |



| | Power Distance | Individualism | Masculinity | Uncertainty Avoidance | Long Term Orientation | Indulgence |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| India | 77 | 48 | 56 | 40 | 51 | 26 |
| Netherlands | 38 | 80 | 14 | 53 | 67 | 68 |

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

# Tips gathered from the field

01

# Recruiting diverse research participants

# Perception of time

Examples:

- Developers from India don't mind joining a research session after their working hours. Some have low barriers between private and work life. Once someone showed up for an interview while hanging out with friends at a café.

- Generally, research participants from US and EU prefer to stick to their working hours.

# Perception of time

What can you do:

- Explain the challenge with scheduling: people will try to make it work.

- Be clear about timezones - yours and theirs

- Ensure you emphasise on adherence to interview guidelines

FIGURE 8.1. **SCHEDULING**

Germany  Japan  Netherlands        Poland           Spain Italy  Brazil China        Saudi Arabia
Switzerland  Sweden  US  UK  Czech Republic  France      Russia  Mexico        India Nigeria
              Denmark                                          Turkey        Kenya

**Linear time** ←———————————————————————————→ **Flexible time**

**Linear time** — Project steps are approached in a sequential fashion, completing one task before beginning the next. One thing at a time. No interruptions. The focus is on the deadline and sticking to the schedule. Emphasis is on promptness and good organization over flexibility.

**Flexible time** — Project steps are approached in a fluid manner, changing tasks as opportunities arise. Many hings are dealt with at once and interruptions accepted. The focus is on adaptability and glexibility is valued over organization.

**02**

# Connecting with your research participants

# Establishing rapport

Examples:

- Sometimes you need to make small talk before you get started

- Understanding local context is important – Signing in with mobile number is quite common in India.

- Not all cultures are open to giving negative feedback – My mom would say that everything is okay, and will never again use the product

# Establishing rapport

What can you do:

- Research the context: Try a competing local product; Look on popular forums such as Reddit

- Check your questionnaire with a local – are they understanding it in the same way as you? Can you phrase differently?

- "What can be improved" rather than "what do you dislike?"
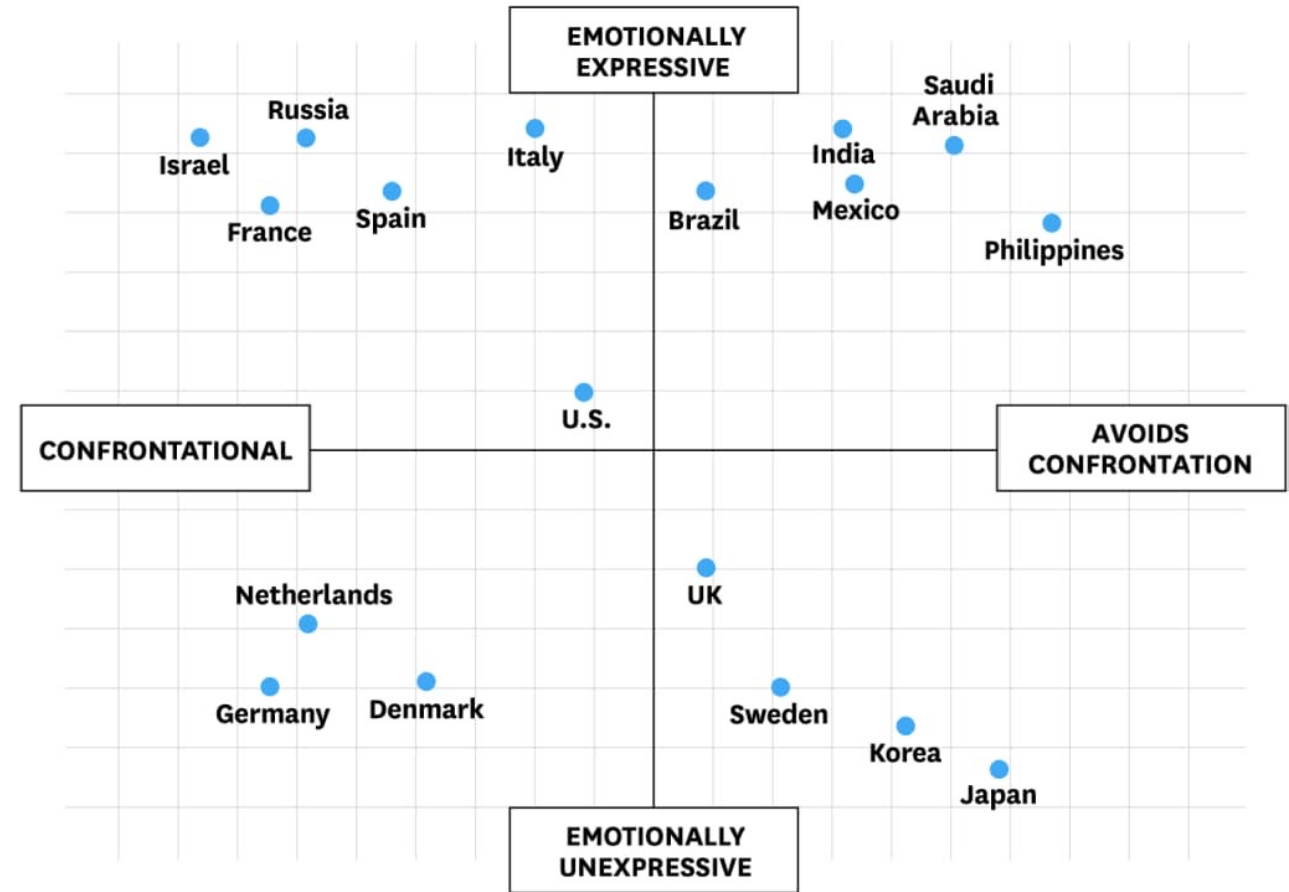
# Conclusions

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# Culture is complex.
## Culture goes beyond nationality.

# Study on Hofstede's Dimensions by Annemiek van Boeijen
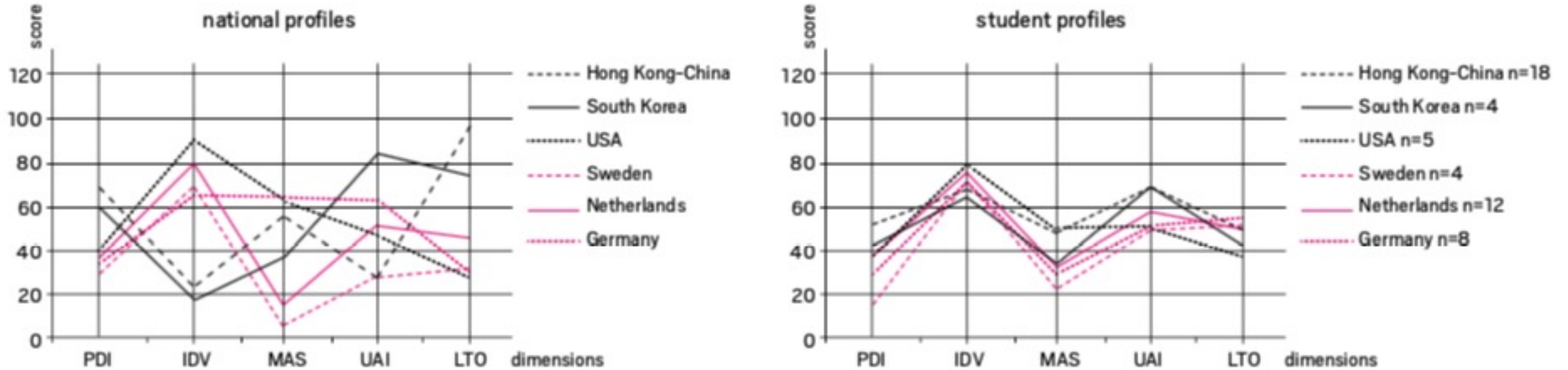


Figure 3.16 Cultural profiles: nations (left) and i.do students grouped by country (right)

# Doubt can be good.
It makes us stop and look around.

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CONTEXT

CHARACTER

CULTURE

MORE INCLUSIVE STEREOTYPES
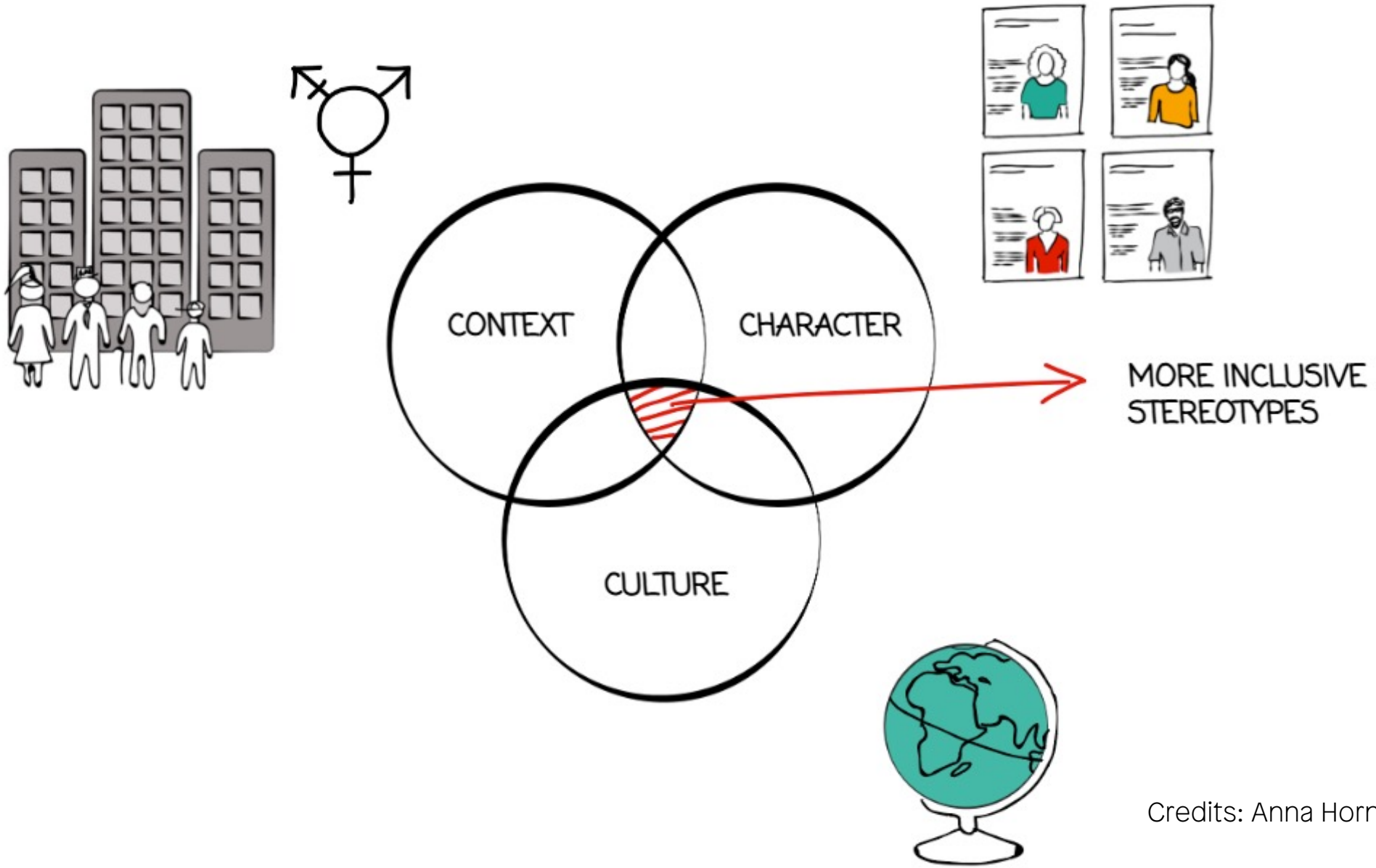
Credits: Anna Hornberger

# Be curious. Be kind.
## No culture is better than the other.

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Awareness

↓

Understanding

↓

Communication

↓

**Embracing diversity**

# Diversity alone doesn't lead to inclusion.

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# Recap

One thing I will do differently tomorrow..

Drop a line in the chat 💬

# Links to my work

- Website: https://www.youbee.in/

- Paintings: https://100daysoffeelings.tumblr.com/

# Further resources

Articles:
- https://ww.linkedin.com/pulse/nps-17-does-culture-affect-customer-survey-outcomes-17th-fitzgerald/
- https://uxinsight.org/do-your-part-driving-inclusivity-and-diversity-as-ux-researchers/
- https://medium.com/usabilitygeek/cross-cultural-ux-research-and-design-resources-531e084587b7
- About feedback preferences: https://larahogan.me/blog/first-one-on-one-questions/

Videos:
- https://vimeo.com/350720470
- https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story/c
- https://vimeo.com/819859280/08b0a41e42