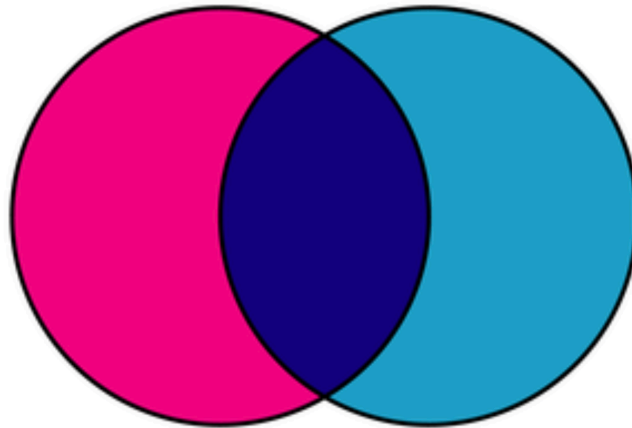


Inter-cultural Team Working for Church Planters

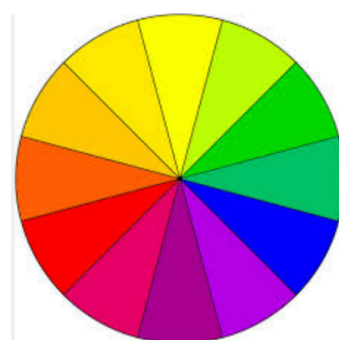
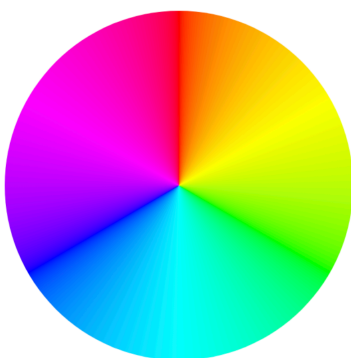
1. **The need for intercultural teams:** our communities, cities and country becoming more diverse and complex.



"I feel part of British culture and part of Asian culture and simultaneously feel I belong completely to neither but a unique "third space" culture" - Saree and Chips by Ram Gidamool.

"We live in a world of cultural tensions - being pulled by our upbringing but also Western Secular thought" - RR

2. **So think inter-cultural (infusion) -** rather than cross-cultural (2 cultures side by side).



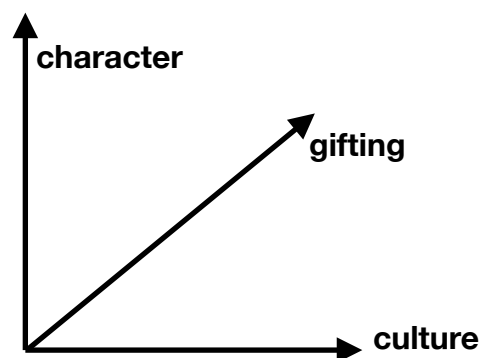
e.g. in our All Nations Staff Team - 2 people of white caucasian background are culturally different - one American, one British; 2 people of South Asian background have different upbringing - one a christian home in India; another a Hindu home in London - later converted".

3. The challenge of the Biblical Mandate Unity & Diversity (Eph 4, 1 Cor 12, Rev 7)



“As a church of all nations, we should reflect this unity as different people serve one another sacrificially...we want to keep both unity and diversity...unity without diversity is uniformity; diversity but no unity is anarchy...but both unity and diversity is church like a symphony orchestra playing together to produce good music. We want to avoid forming segregated groups and cliques (first image - no mixing). We want to avoid one dominant culture pushing other cultures to the periphery (onion, garlic and coriander pushed aside to the dominant tomato soup flavour). We want to develop working together in harmony - inclusivity - unity and diversity (roast)”¹.

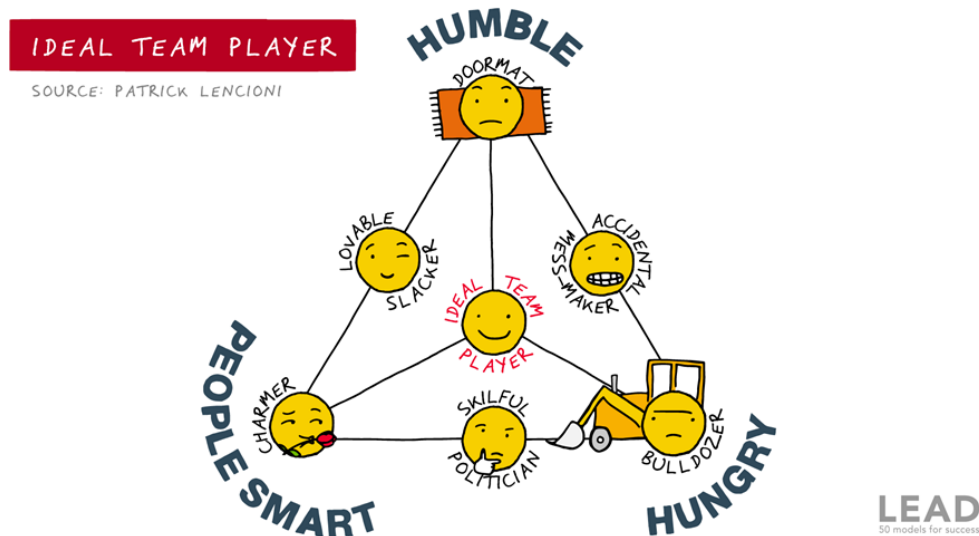
4. Be aware of character - gifting - culture axes in inter-cultural teams - adds layers of complexity to the overall chemistry of the team!



“Character covers over a multitude of flaws” - Tim Keller, Center Church
 Remember gifting can be broken down into **capability** (how good they are); **capacity** (how much they can do); **competency** (can they do it) - RR

¹ I am grateful to Felix Arema at London City Mission in a session he did on diversity to help shape my thinking on this when planting All Nations Church.

5. Humility is Key in Intercultural Team dynamics - The Ideal Team Player - Patrick Lencioni²



*If we're going to reach people from other cultures, **we as church planters need to possess humility in the inter-cultural teams we lead and to continue to grow in humility**, cultural awareness and understanding. We need to first understand our own culture and cultural blindspots, biases and the way we see the world, before we start to understand other cultures" - RR*

6. Know your leadership voice and others in your eldership and staff team - 5 voices/ enneagrams



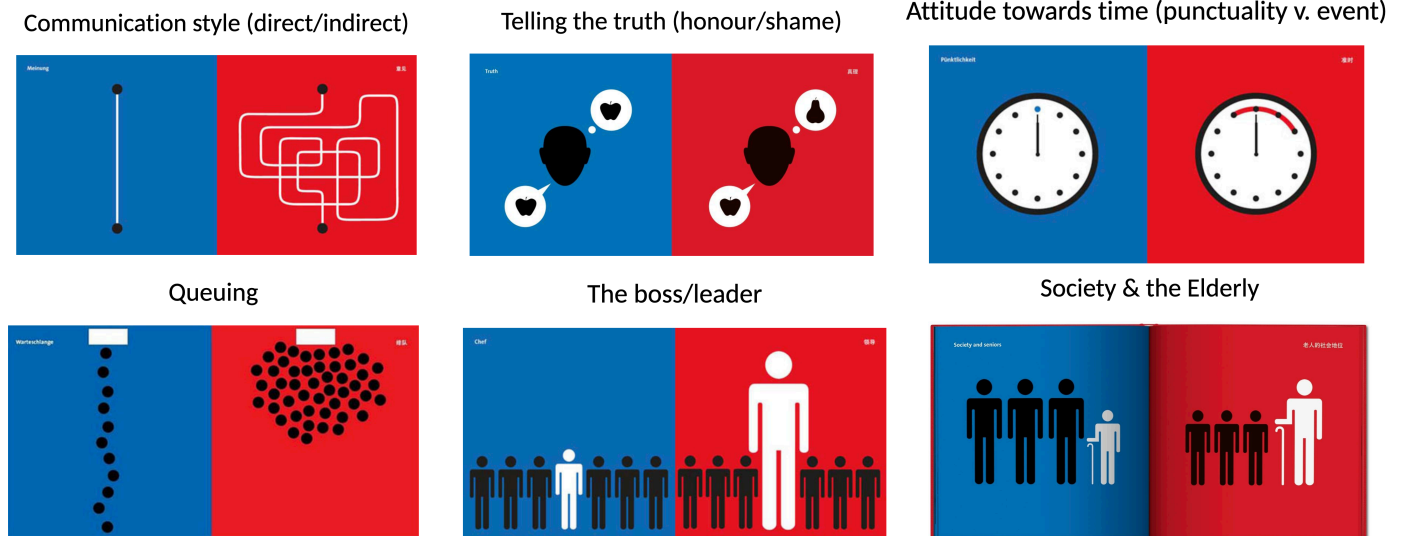
THE ENNEAGRAM PERSONALITY TEST

Explore the 9 Types and Discover Who You Truly Are



² I am grateful to Ray Evans Leadership training and mentoring in shaping my thinking on this.

7. East meets West- again if truly inter-cultural - think infusion - it should be purple



8. Exercise (pairs/ threes) - where on the scale would you place yourself?³

FIGURE 1.1. COMMUNICATING



Low Context Good communication is precise, simple, and clear. Messages are expressed and understood at face value. 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.

FIGURE 2.2. EVALUATING

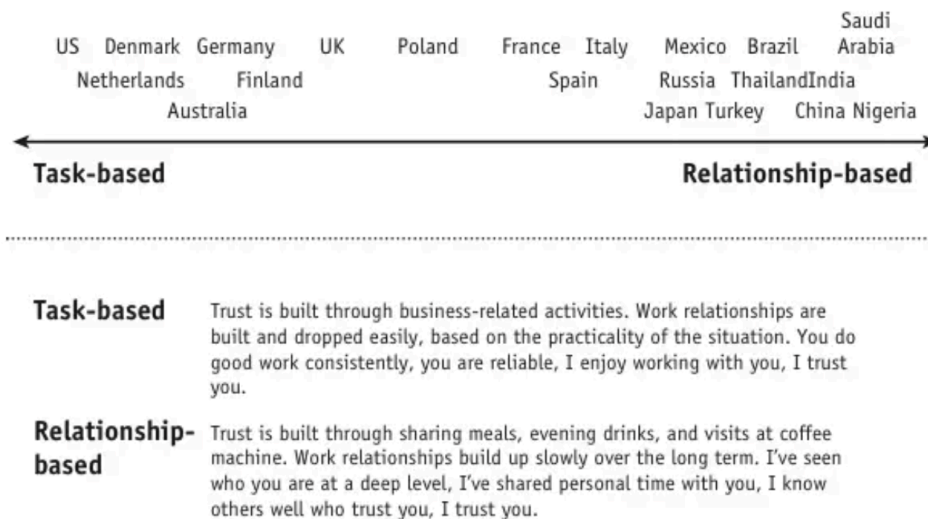


³The Culture Map

³ Taken from : <https://www.businessinsider.com/the-culture-map-8-scales-for-work-2015-1?r=UK> (On Wed 6 Dec 2023). Interesting article on: These 8 scales reveal everything you should know about different cultures. I disagree - not everything but something - its illustrative and helpful but not determinative.

FIGURE 4.1. LEADING

"The Culture Map"



"The Culture Map"

FIGURE 7.1. DISAGREEING

"The Culture Map"

9. Case Studies - Inter-cultural team dynamics

1. *A new member of staff is upset that they didn't come with you to a meeting about a potential new ministry opportunity. When you asked initially, she said she was 'unavailable' due to a prior ministry commitment. It was later discovered that if she knew what the meeting was about, she would have moved things around as this was a personal study day. **What is the under-lying inter-cultural issue? How do you respond?***
2. *A ministry trainee is flapping about an upcoming guest service they are leading and despite your attempts to re-assure them and be clear of their expectations, keep sending long messages which is becoming rather frustrating for you and others on the team who have all got it. **What is the underlying cultural issue? How do you respond?***
3. *An elder keeps bringing up in your meetings: "That is not how we did it at our previous church", followed by leadership pep talks on occasion. This is getting really frustrating and is unhelpful in moving the church forwards. They bring several decades of ministry experience and wisdom but your concerned this will not work for the kind of inter-cultural church your looking to plant in 21st century London. **What is the underlying cultural issue? How do you respond?***

Useful Resources

- Intercultural teams
 1. Erin Meyer, Culture Map ([TED talk](#), [summary article with tables](#))
 2. [Intercultural competency – Personal Assessment](#)
 3. [Intercultural competency – Congregational Assessment](#)
 4. [Creating meaningful partnerships across cultures](#) (Yannick Christos-Wahab, especially from 23:30)
 5. Duane Elmer, *Cross-cultural conflict*, IVP (1993).
 6. Bernard Adeney, *Strange Virtues*, Apollos (1995).
 7. Georges, Jayson. "The 3D Gospel - Ministry in guilt, shame and fear cultures". (Time Press, 2017).
 8. Elmer, Duane. "Cross-cultural Servanthood - Serving the World in Christlike Humility". (IVP, 2006).