

LEVEL GROUND

CROSSING CULTURAL BARRIERS

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Culture



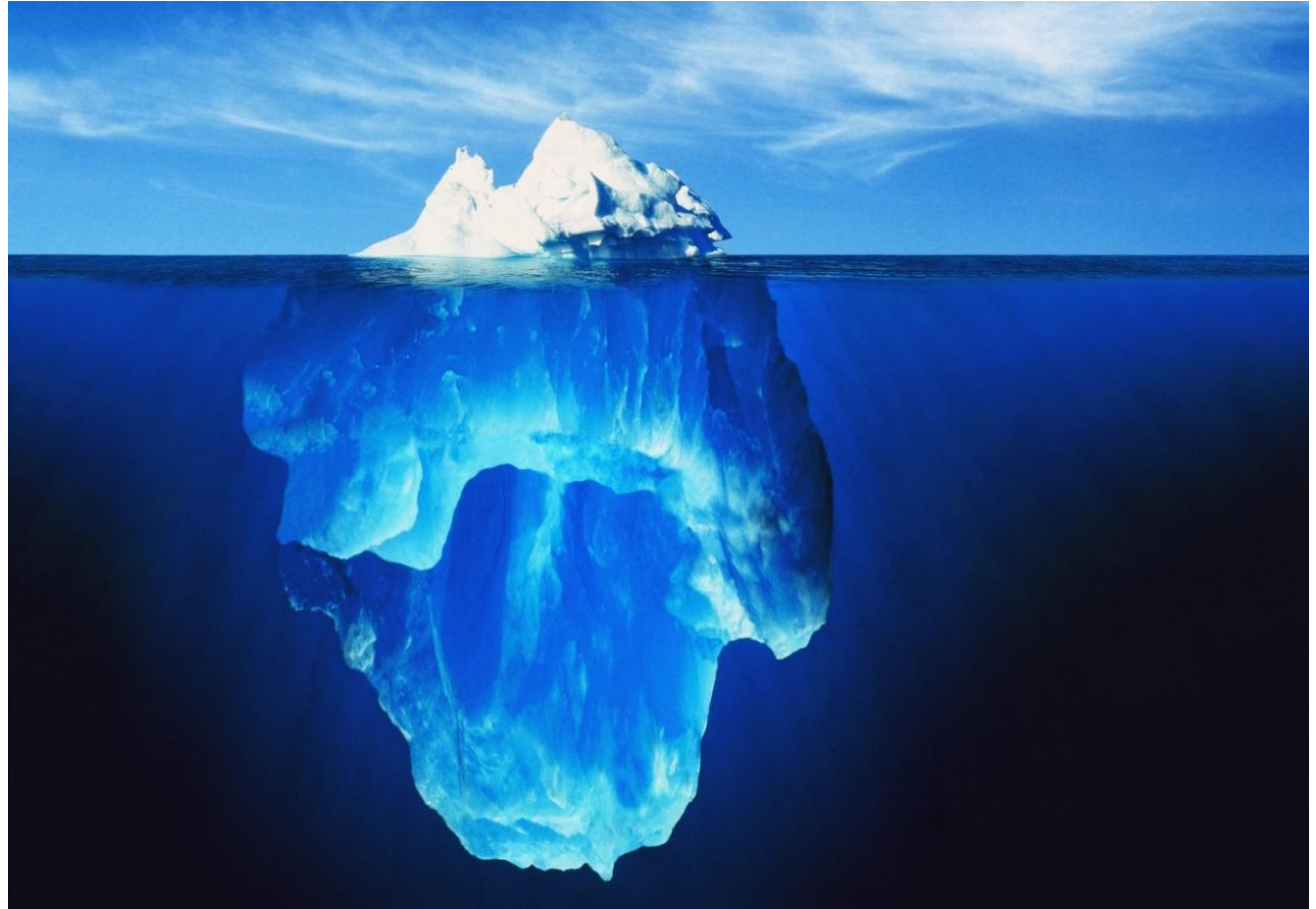
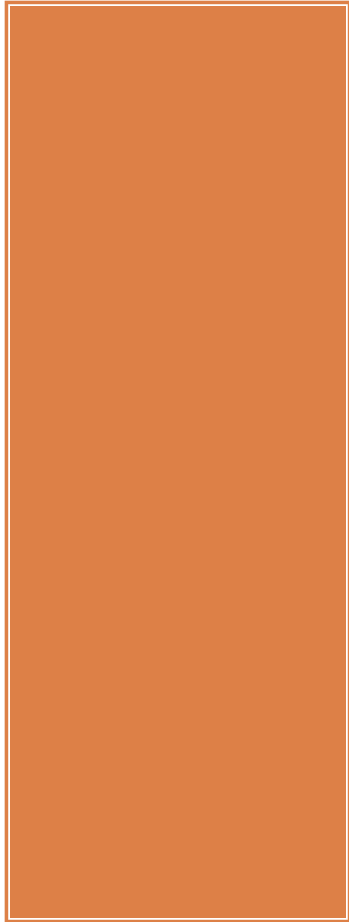
The attitudes, values, and behaviors of the local people and their response to yours.

The conceptual design by which people order their lives, interpret their experiences, and evaluate the behavior of others.

What do you see?



Now what do you see?



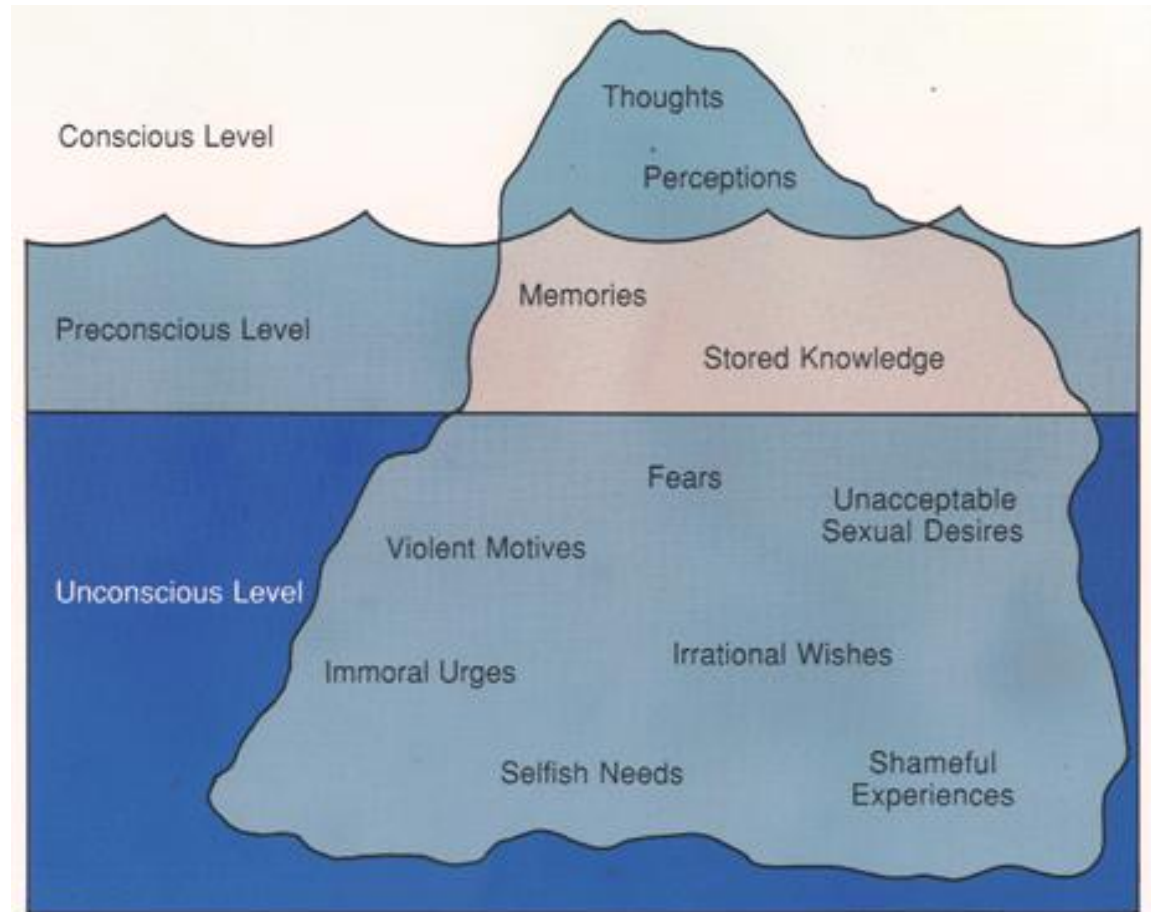
The Mental Iceberg

Behavior

Values

Beliefs

Assumptions



Cross-cultural Interactions are subject to...

- confusion
- misunderstanding
- misinterpretation

Barriers

- Expectations of locals
- Language
- Gender Role
- Climate
- Doing Without
- Loss of Routines
- Unfamiliar Faces

How to avoid barriers?

- Most important is to be aware of challenges
- Manage expectations prior to trip
- Educate about cultural differences
- Learning to appreciate differences
- Get plenty of rest
- Don't be too hard on yourself
- Remind yourself of the big picture

Cultural Conditioning



As a leader it is important to prepare group members on expectations, common cultural barriers, and ways to interact effectively while on a Global Builders trip.

Ways to prepare team members

- Reading about local culture prior to trip
- Creating culture guide for team
- Encouraging members to observe local culture
- Encouraging team members to ask questions about specific behaviors

Signs of Cultural Shock

Turning against the locals

- ❑ Lazy
- ❑ No ambition
- ❑ No sense of time
- ❑ Don't care about deadlines
- ❑ Not serious about their work
- ❑ Dishonest
- ❑ Can't be trusted
- ❑ No ethics

Avoiding locals and group members

- ❑ Spending a lot of time alone
- ❑ Limited interact on the worksite
- ❑ Won't interact in group setting

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Understanding Differences

Use of Time

North Americans

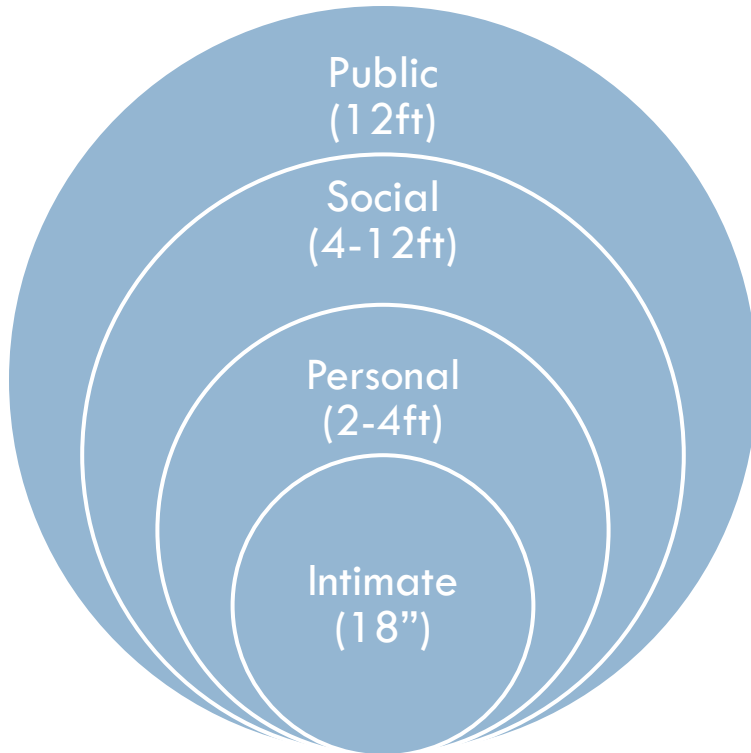
- Time oriented culture
- Things begin on time and being 5 min late will cause some person to be upset.

Latin Americans

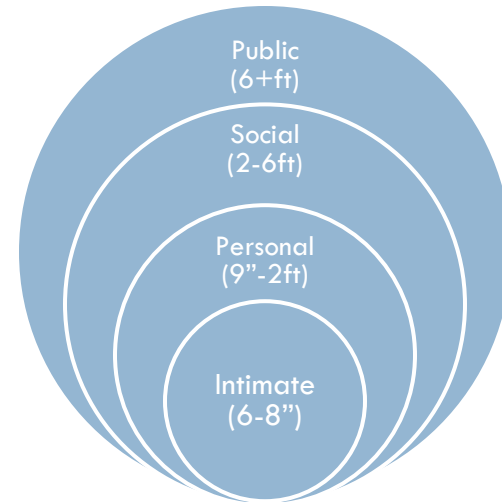
- Event oriented culture
- Half-a-hour late in normal
- Tension begins to build would people are 2 hours late

Use of Space

North Americans



Latin Americans



Eye Contact

North Americans

Shows someone you are interested in the conversation

Shows honesty and respect

Hispanics and Asians

Extended contact can be taken as a challenge of authority, as well as, being disrespectful and rude

Brief eye contact is considered acceptable

Avoiding eye contact is usually interpreted as being polite

Gift Giving

Acceptable Gifts

- Additional donation to organizations to continue work in country
- Sentimental gifts to locals such as pictures
- Community items
- Ministry donations (clothing, bedding, school supplies, medical supplies...)

Unacceptable Gifts

- Don't give gifts of monetary value to locals
- Don't give money to locals
- Disposable items (McD's Toys)

Giving gifts actually destroys the partnership concept and teaches reliance on others...

Things to remember...

- Be patience
- Led by example
- Be aware of your surroundings
- Embrace the experience and don't forget to have fun

Outcomes

- New Perspective
 - ▣ See the same behaviors and attitudes from more than one perspective
 - ▣ Self Discovery - Learn about your own culture