

Delivering on Our Promise: Infusing Intercultural Agility throughout the Student Experience

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Intercultural Agility

the ability to navigate effectively and productively in diverse settings

Cultivated through a combination of:

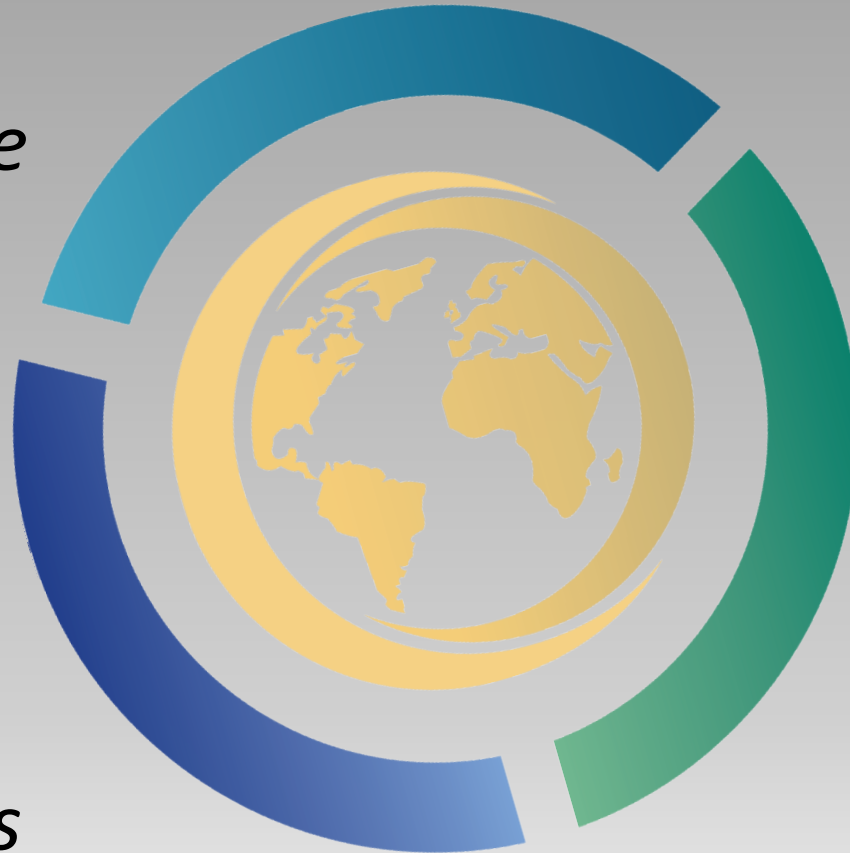
- Greater knowledge of self, others, and cultural frameworks
- Skills of interaction and interpretation
- Attitudes of flexibility, curiosity and empathy

The Student Experience

Pre-arrival
Knowledge

On-site
Skills

Re-entry
Attitudes



Two Constants in Study Abroad

- Student
- Advisor

Strengthen our own intercultural agility while
cultivating our students'



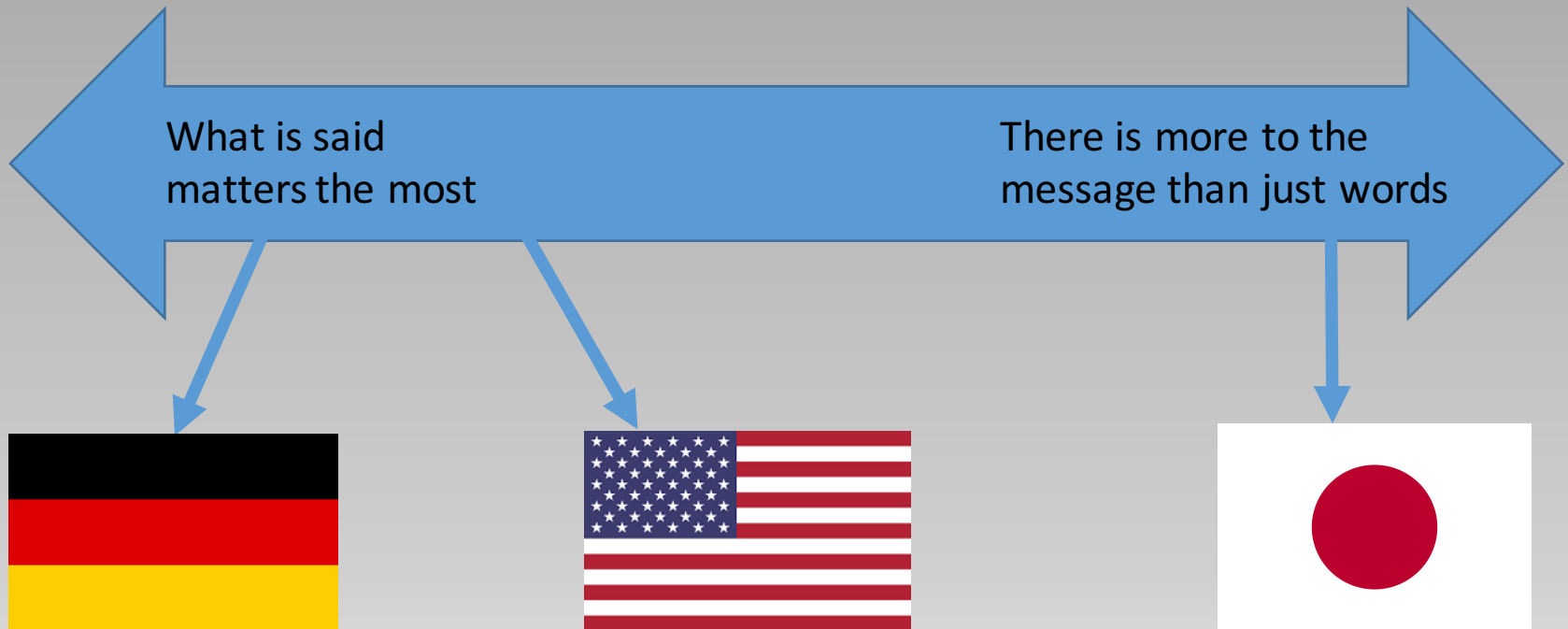
Knowledge of Self

How does YOUR culture inform...

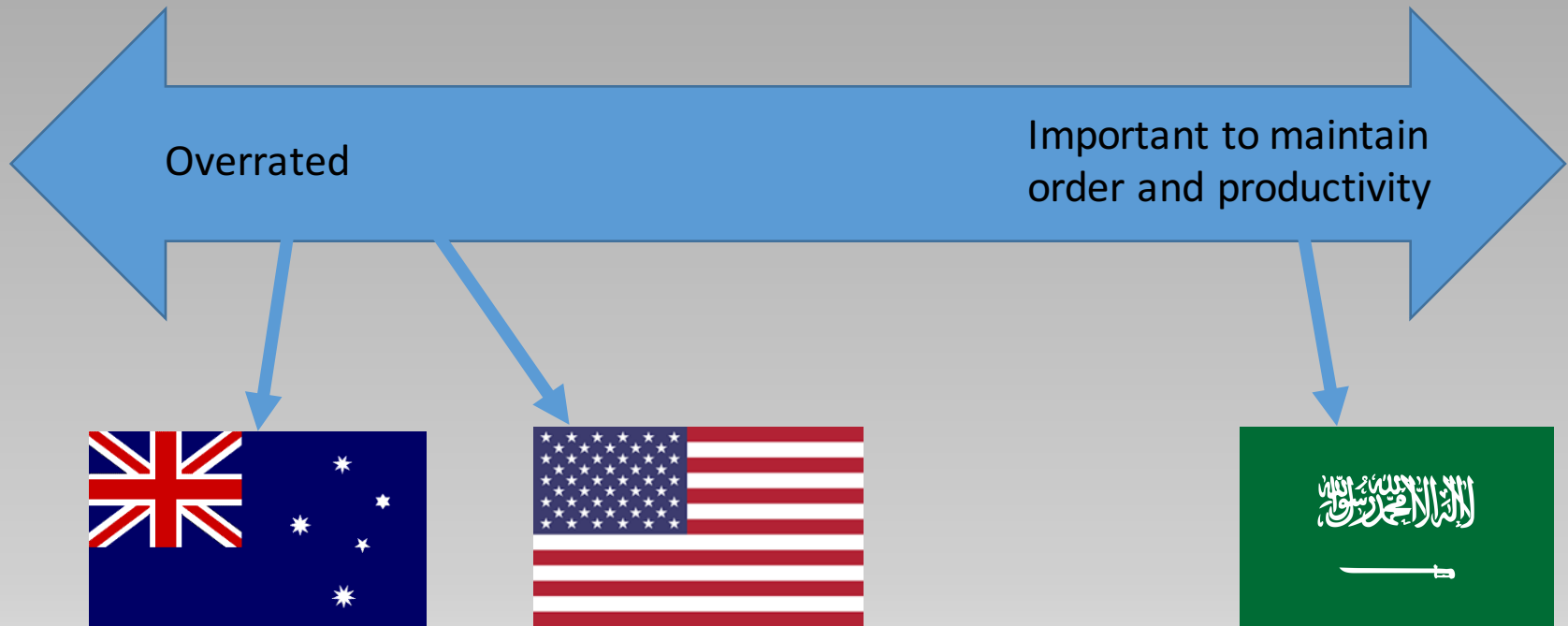
- Student: your study abroad experience
- Advisor: how you advise



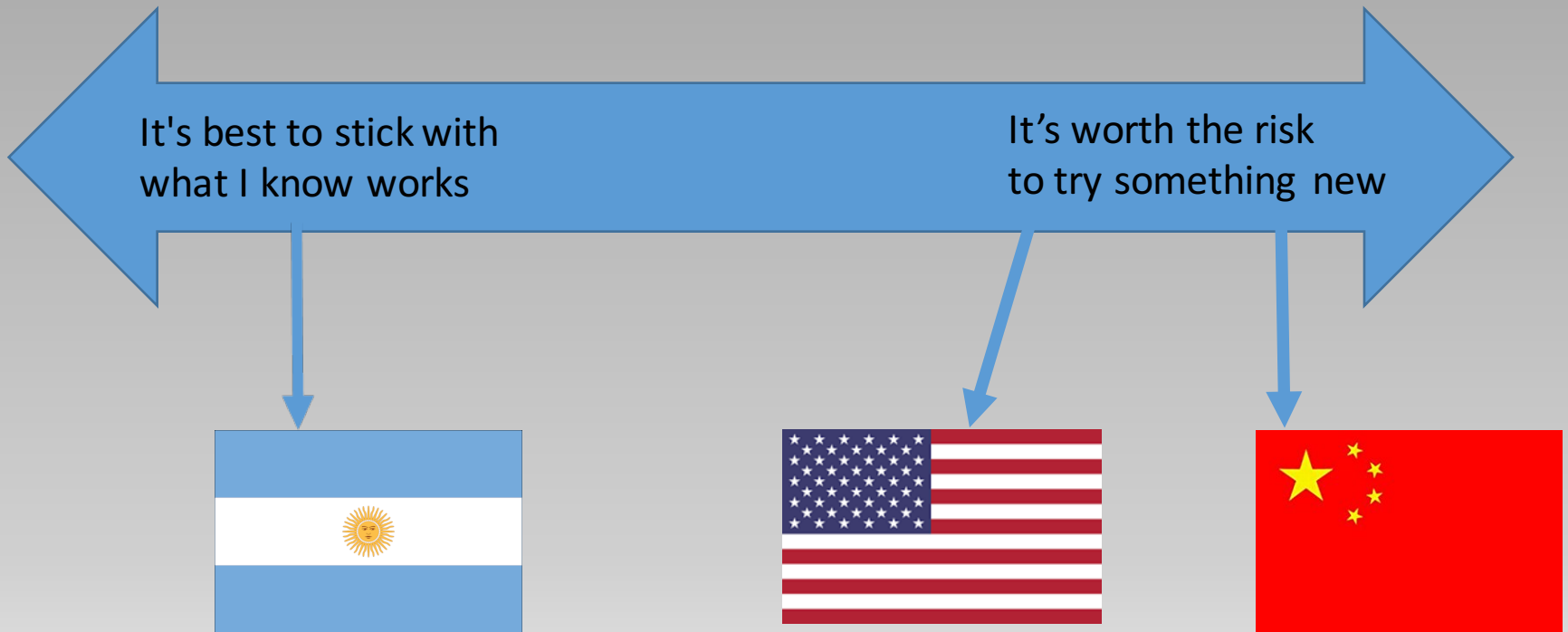
In communication....



Status is



Considering a new opportunity, I generally think...



Cultural Dimensions

Reveal:

- Universal values
- Personal cultural identity
- Diversity within culture groups
- Benefits and drawbacks of stereotypes



The Pre-arrival Experience

- Check our own cultural identity and how it affects advising
- Research the cultures we work with
- Invite students to think about and share their cultural identity
- Discuss stereotypes
- Create space for predicting areas of cultural difference, potential conflict, and growth



On-site Advisor as Cultural Mentor

- My role is to help the student develop a cultural as well as an academic approach to their time abroad so they can make the most of the opportunity it represents
- I engage with the student throughout their “abroad” journey to encourage cultural infusion
- To explain, to reassure, and to encourage – a personal Cheer-Leader!

The Learning Plan – Student

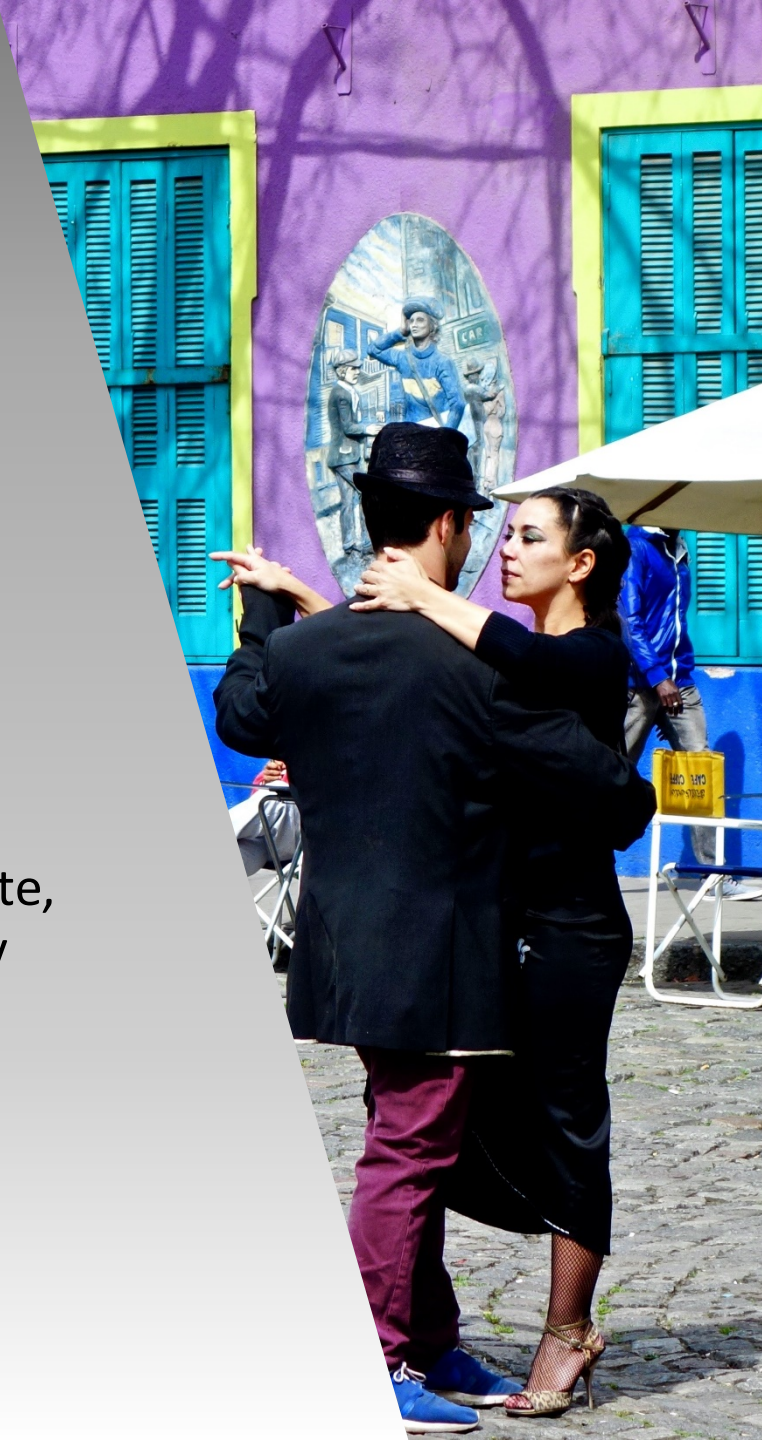
- Encourages student to stop and consider what Study Abroad means to her – as in “what do I want to achieve/why am I doing it?”
- Encourages student to be active participants in her actual study abroad experience
- It is a tangible way for a student to track her development abroad and it also offers opportunities for self reflection

The Learning Plan – Advisor

- Review the student's goals and objectives in advance to see what pre-conceptions they may have and what I can do to address them once they are on-site, then I consider what site-specific options there are for the student
- Having provided the student with information on the opportunities available I would then encourage her to act on them
- It is a tangible way for me to track a student's development abroad and it offers me opportunities to encourage her to self reflect

Community and Culture

- Encourages students to join clubs and societies, as participation in them enriches the student's experience while abroad and often leads to questions about social interactions/cultural meaning which they might not otherwise have
- Encourages students, where it is appropriate, to try to engage with the wider community beyond the ivory towers of academe



The Learning Plan – how I utilize it

Instructions

IFSA is committed to helping students achieve their goals. On the next page, please list one to three goals related to academics, personal or professional development. These can be as detailed or broad as you would like.

1. Academic goals while abroad

a. Become a more independent learner

b. Improve my writing skills

c. Begin primary source/archive research for my senior thesis

The Learning Plan – how I utilize it

2. Personal goals while abroad

a. Become more comfortable travelling alone

b.

c.

The Learning Plan – how I utilize it

3. Professional development goals (while abroad and when returning home)

a. To gain a work/educational connection in Oxford that will help my career in the future.

b. Broaden my professional network

c.

The Learning Plan – Student

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The Learning Plan – Advisor

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Intercultural Agility

- To encourage the student to be an active learner in her experience
- To exhort the student to explore the different and to engage with their host communities – college and town
 - Engaging with the ‘Other’ promotes resilience – it acknowledges that mistakes will be made and thus sanctions the making of them
- To make the student aware of the Interpersonal Skills they are developing by engaging with the ‘Other’ and to encourage them to practice

Intercultural Agility

- To discuss the student's "future self" and how her Study Abroad experience can impact it – *resume* for example – this encourages the student to buy into her study abroad experience beyond the simple transfer of credit
- To create a space to address topics such as cultural humility, different social *moeurs* or.... Intercultural Agility
- Important for the mentor to listen, to explain and to provide reassurance – academic/social/cultural

The Onward Journey

- Lifelong project – cultural competence takes time and Intercultural Agility even longer, so what can we all do to encourage them to continue on this journey?



The Re-entry Period

- Passes the baton back to home institutions, with continued support and resources of on-site providers
- Presents opportunity to repeat activities and revisit conversations from pre-arrival and on-site phases
- Provides evidence of new Knowledge and Skills while cultivating new Attitudes in context of their home culture(s)

How will *you* infuse
Intercultural Agility
throughout *your*
students' experiences?

