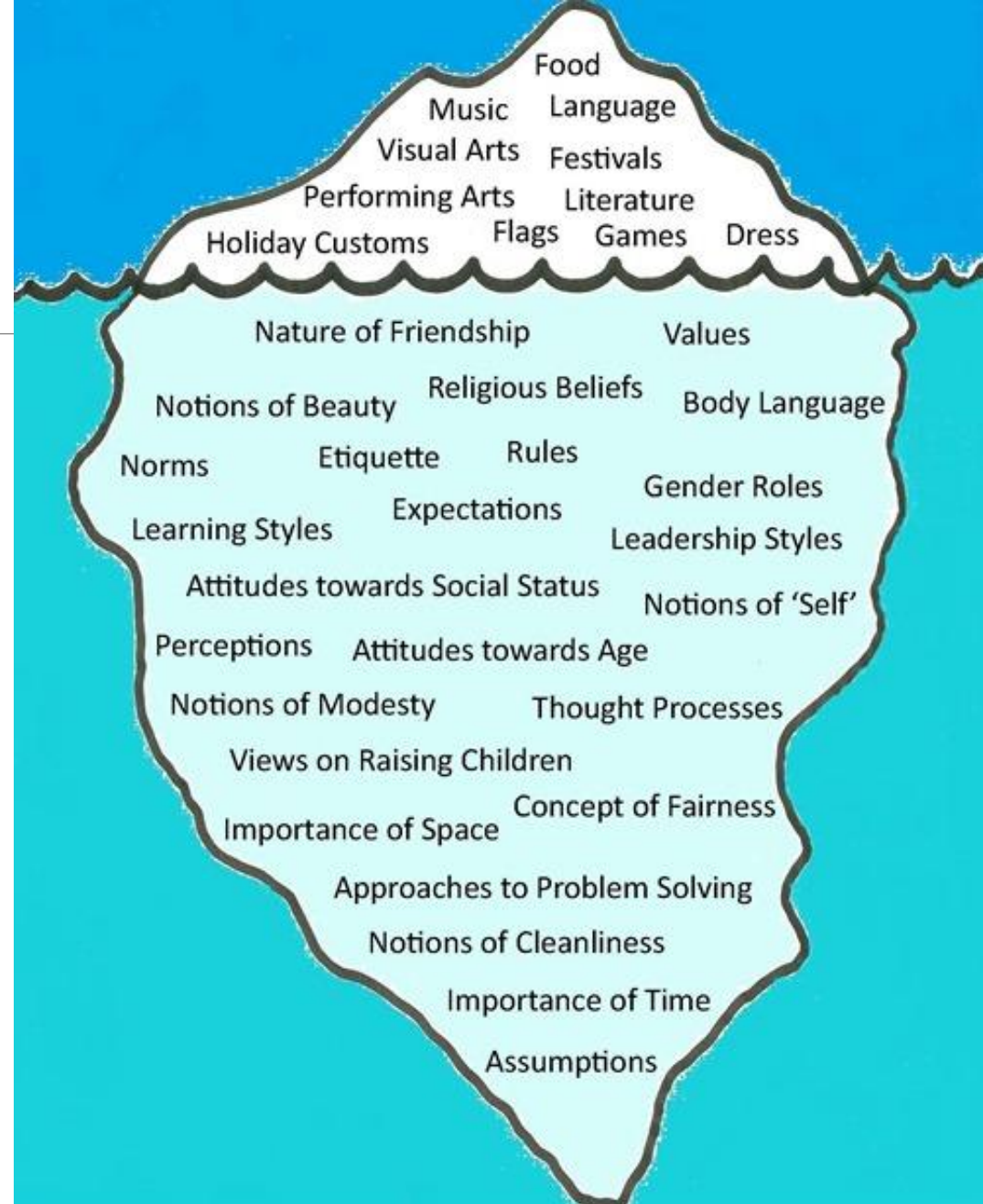


What is Culture?

“A fish only realizes it needs water for living when it is no longer swimming in water. Our culture is to us like water to the fish. We live and breathe through our culture.”

Dr. Fons Trompenaars

The Iceberg Model



Key Values in Ethiopia

- ❖ Community
- ❖ Family
- ❖ Loyalty
- ❖ Faith
- ❖ Hospitality
- ❖ Friendship
- ❖ Unity

Greetings

- ❖ Greet with a light handshake and eye contact
- ❖ Greet business associates with the proper title
- ❖ Keep gifts modest
- ❖ Don't rush the greeting
- ❖ Business cards are given out casually
Unlike in Japan, Ethiopians don't have an elaborate ritual around handing over and inspecting each others business cards; they are just given out casually. Accept someone's business card either with your right hand only, or with both hands. Using left hand only is considered as a sign of disrespect.
- ❖ Speak softly
- ❖ In a work context, it would be very important to address other persons with their title ("Ato" for man or "Weziro" for woman). Once good relationship is developed it is possible to drop the title but whether or not this would be appropriate or not needs to be assessed. Some elders really prefer to be addressed by their title.

Small Talk: good topics

- ❖ Sport
- ❖ Home country
- ❖ Family and friends
- ❖ Job
- ❖ Journey
- ❖ Weather
- ❖ Beautiful countryside of the country
- ❖ Food Books

Small Talk: topics to avoid

Taboo topics to avoid mostly depend on context !!!

- ❖ Criticizing the government
- ❖ Colonial history
- ❖ Unemployment
- ❖ Don't be educational and smart-alec!
- ❖ Poverty
- ❖ Corruption
- ❖ Ethnical backgrounds

Communication – verbal and non-verbal

❖ Direct vs. Indirect Conversation

Direct Conversation – What is said, open and direct speech, open criticism

Indirect Conversation – How is something said, subtle communication, maintain social harmony

Rule of communication

- ❖ Ethiopians tend to be non-confrontational and offer what they believe is the expected response rather than say something that might embarrass another.
- ❖ Honour and dignity are crucial of Ethiopians.
- ❖ Treat Ethiopian business colleagues and employees with utmost professionalism and to avoid anything that would make them lose dignity and respect.

Nonverbal Communication

80% of all human communication takes place nonverbally !

- ❖ Facial Expressions
- ❖ Gestures
- ❖ Eye Contact and Gaze
- ❖ Space and Distance (Proxemics)
- ❖ Touch
- ❖ Silence

Business Meetings

- ❖ Meeting schedules are not very rigid in Ethiopia
- ❖ Meetings start with extended social pleasantries
- ❖ Meetings seldom have a scheduled ending time

Time Management and Planning

Ethiopians are multi-focused:

- ❖ Several things at the same time
- ❖ Time Management irrelevant
- ❖ Oral commitments
- ❖ Long-term relationships
- ❖ Reconfirm appointments frequently

Decision Making

- Ethiopians have difficulty saying "no" to requests from business associates. This does not indicate that they will do what they have agreed to do, however.

Business relations – Building Trust

- ❖ Relationship dynamics are extremely important in Ethiopian business setting.
- ❖ It is very important to establish personal relationships with colleagues or clients so as to establish and run business smoothly and successfully in the country.
- ❖ The best way to establish a good relationship is to win their trust, show respect, listen to what they say, and try to understand things from their point of view. The stronger the friendship, the easier it is for them to develop trust. Moving straight into business related discussions without making proper introductions and small talk would be considered rude

Danke für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit



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