



# BRAZILIANS WORKING IN DENMARK

A study of the cultural work differences between  
Brazilian and Danish employees and how to  
accommodate them

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*“As organizations become more global, mergers and strategic alliances become more common, developing the skills to get the best from different cultures become a necessity rather than an option.”*

(Plum, Achen, Dræby, & Jensen, 2008, p. 9).

## Abstract

Cultural differences in a workplace often have a greater impact on work efficiency than one thinks: it can create miscommunication, misinterpretations as well as frustrations which will affect the work environment and ultimately affect the company's bottom line. Having a basic understanding of your own cultural traits and why you behave like you do as well as those of others will help prevent these cultural frustrations and lead to a healthy work environment and an efficient and fruitful teamwork.

While it has traditionally been EU-workers coming to Denmark for work due to the free mobility, it is worth it for companies to expand their search for employees outside the EU borders. Brazil is with its more than 200 million people and a growing group of highly educated people, a great market for seeking new hires, and in the last ten years more and more Brazilian workers have taken the trip over the Atlantic to land a job in Denmark. This thesis aims to examine which cultural work challenges appear when Brazilians move to Denmark to work, and as well as how Danish employers best can prepare for these challenges.

The cultural theories of Geert Hofstede, Simon Ulrik Kragh, Alfons Trompenaars, Edward Hall and Elizabeth Plum form the framework for the thesis and they have all been used to gain a deeper understanding of the organizational cultural traits of Brazil and Denmark and which differences are the most significant when the two cultures meet each other in the workplace. The data for analysis was collected through several interviews with Brazilians who came to Denmark because of work, and the interview questions were all created with basis in the different cultural theories.

The results of the interviews confirmed several cultural differences between Denmark and Brazil in organizational culture, management styles, work motivation as well as different time management and communication styles. While many of the cultural work differences were viewed with positive eyes, what the interviewees found to be the cultural differences causing the most frustrations is the Danish communication, which for them is too vague, and that their Danish colleagues tend to be unapproachable and closed which results in a less relaxed work environment. Using Elizabeth Plum's theory of Cultural Intelligence can help employers as well as employees to prevent frustrations caused by cultural work differences and is a great strategy to get a more successful integration of new employees and to be better prepared for future hires.

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## Introduction

Cultural differences in a workplace can have a greater impact on work efficiency than one might think. In a world where numerous companies are both expanding across national borders, and hiring employees from abroad, the modern-day worker is bound to deal with cultural differences at some point. Our cultural background affects the way we think, act and interpret each other's communication and work contributions. If we fail to acknowledge and understand that cultural differences can be the reasons for misunderstandings and miscommunications in a work environment, we will fail to have an efficient cooperation with our colleagues, and this will ultimately affect the company's bottom line.

When companies hire workforce from abroad, it is important to understand that, while the new employees are going to adjust to a new place, and are likely trying very hard to do so, it is important that it is not a one-way adjustment. Managing to work around cultural challenges and misunderstandings applies to all participants and not just to 'the other' or the newly arrived. It is vital for the cooperation to be successful that the employer as well as the other workers, have a basic understanding about the new employee's culture as well as their own and how their own culture makes them act and communicate like they do.

In the recent years Denmark have hired more and more skilled foreign workforce from abroad. Many medium sized Danish enterprises are experiencing a rapid growth and have therefore started to search for workers on the global market. The trend of hiring workforce from abroad is growing which often originates in the fact that with the increasing demand it is difficult to find enough skilled workforce in Denmark, so recruiters must seek these skills abroad. Another trend is that when a company has a desire to expand globally and expand fast, having a global workforce will provide the company with a variety of different mindsets, skillsets and ways of viewing and solving problems, something that eventually could lead to ground-breaking and innovative products.

Workforce from other EU countries have for a long period of time come and gone from the Danish labor market due to free mobility, and while the number of non-EU nationalities coming to work in Denmark is not as high, the number is rising. In countries like Brazil, with a growing middle class of highly educated people, many people choose to seek new challenges abroad, and the amount of Brazilians moving to Denmark have almost doubled over the last ten years; from 2 387 in 2010 to 4 164 in 2020 (Appendix I).

Denmark has in Brazil for the last couple of years been promoted to be a great place to work due to the Danish lifestyle of 'hygge', the 37 hour work week, parental leave combined with the rising amount of job openings in skilled jobs such as in the medical industry (Globo, 2017). And while there are jobs to get in Brazil, getting a job might require you to move across the country, which can easily be a 6-8 hour trip by plane, then why not fly those 6-8 hours somewhere else to try something completely different?

While the focus often lies on the Spanish speaking countries in Latin America, Brazil is with its more than 200 million people and a growing group of highly educated people, a great market for seeking new hires. And with the growing number of Brazilians working in Denmark, attaining knowledge on cultural characteristics of Brazilians at work is valuable in order to get a successful transition and a good teamwork with Danish colleagues in place.

Just like hiring people from any other culture a new Brazilian employee will need to adjust to a new workstyle, management style, communication style and all in all a whole new way of doing things. However, to have a successful transition and teamwork in a new job, it is important that it is not a one-way adjustment, which leads to the problem formulation of this thesis:

**- Which cultural work challenges appear when Brazilians move to Denmark to work, and how can Danish employers best prepare for these challenges?**

This thesis will examine the cultural work differences between Denmark and Brazil by using different cultural theories to analyze interviews of Brazilians who came to Denmark to work. The focus will be on the cultural differences at work, such as corporate cultures, management styles, authority, work motivation as well as different time management and communication styles. The aim of the paper is to use the given cultural theories to determine certain aspects in which the Danish and the Brazilian work cultures differ, and to examine if the Brazilians being interviewed confirm these aspects or perhaps refer to different aspects, not covered in the chosen theories. The intention of the paper is not to offer concrete solutions to such cultural differences, it is rather to determine what the differences are in order to provide employers/coworkers with an understanding of the reasoning behind these differences and hereby achieve a more fruitful and efficient collaboration and communication.

Firstly, a definition of the chosen theories will be provided, followed by a methodology section summarizing the chosen interview process as well as a definition of how the interview questions can be

related back to the theories. Next, the interview answers will be analyzed and the extent to which they correspond with the theories will be examined and discussed. Possible topics mentioned in the interviews that are not covered by the theories will likewise be put up for analysis and discussion. Lastly, the interview analysis and outcomes of this will all be summed up in a conclusion.

## Theories of Culture

The theories chosen for this paper are the cultural theories of Geert Hofstede, Simon Ulrik Kragh, Alfons Trompenaars, Edward Hall and Elizabeth Plum. They will all be used to gain a deeper understanding of the organizational cultural traits of Brazil and Denmark and which differences are the most significant when the two cultures meet each other in the workplace.

Hofstede's theory on Cultural Dimensions, namely the dimensions of Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance and Long-term Orientation will be used to provide an overview of the cultural differences between Denmark and Brazil and give an insight in the reasoning behind cultural challenges in specific areas. While Hofstede's cultural dimensions in some cases generalizes countries and cultures, it is still a good beginning and a great way to gain a general understanding of the cultural background of Brazilian and Danish employees.

Kragh's theory on in-groups and out-groups will be used to understand the importance of trust and moral obligations in Brazilian organizations and to what extent you can trust people outside of your immediate circle of colleagues/friends/family. While Hofstede focuses on the country specific cultural traits, Kragh's theory places importance on the group dynamics within organizations and society in general which will allow for an overall understanding of the bond and commitments between employees in Brazil and how this might differ when starting to work in Denmark.

While Hofstede focuses on the national cultures of countries, Alfons Trompenaars provides a great insight into the various working and organizational styles in different cultures. Following Hofstede's cultural definitions of Denmark and Brazil, Trompenaars' theory on different corporate cultures will be used to get a deeper insight in the work/organizational styles in the two countries. In addition to this Trompenaars' cultural dimensions of Universalism vs. Particularism, Neutral vs. Affective, Specific vs Diffuse, and Achievement vs. Ascription cultures will also be investigated as they are particularly relevant when comparing the different work cultures of the two countries.



Edward T. Hall's theories on High- and Low-Context Cultures and Monochronic and Polychronic cultures will be used to gain an understanding of the different communication and time-management styles of Danes and Brazilians. This is especially relevant for Danish colleagues to have a basic understanding about Brazilian communication/time management styles, as well as understanding their own way of working.

Understanding your own way of working and why you behave like you do is the key element in Elizabeth Plum's theory of Cultural Intelligence, which puts the abovementioned theories into use. Plum's theory will be used to obtain an insight in how cultural clashes/challenges are better prevented or handled when we have a basic understanding of our own culture and why we behave like we do.

The theories will all be used as a framework to make the interview questions for the interviews of Brazilians working in Denmark, which will be method for data collection.

## **Geert Hofstede - Cultural Dimensions**

“Do we need to bother about culture? Every visitor of this site has her or his unique personality, history, and interest. At the same time, we share our human nature. We are group animals. We use language and empathy, and practice collaboration and inter-group competition. The unwritten rules of how we do these things differ from one human group to another. “Culture” is how we call these unwritten rules about how to be a good member of the group.” (Hofstede, Geert. (n.d.)a)

This is how the Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede on his website describes the importance of cultural awareness. Together with his son, the population biologist Gert Jan Hofstede, Geert Hofstede developed the cultural dimensions theory. The theory was published in 1980 and is based on a study between 1967 and 1973 where surveys were sent out to IBM employees from in 40 different countries (The Economist, 2008). Today, almost all the countries in the world is covered by the theory, that gives nations a score on a scale from 1 to 100 on the different cultural dimensions, which creates a great tool for country comparison. The original theory consisted of the four cultural dimensions: Individualism, Power Distance, Masculinity and Uncertainty Avoidance. The last two dimensions Long-term Orientation and Indulgence appear in the version from 2010. The focus in this paper will be on the three

dimensions Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance and Long-term Orientation, which will all be explained below, together with a comparison of how Denmark and Brazil score on these dimensions.

## **Power Distance**

The Power Distance dimension is about how a society handles inequalities among people. This dimension expresses to which extent less powerful members of society, organizations, and institutions (like a family), expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. In countries that rank high on the Power Distance dimension, people accept (and expect) a hierarchical order, where everybody has a place and this place/position does not need further justification. In countries ranking low on the Power Distance dimension, people aim to balance the distribution of power, and demand explanations when power is unevenly distributed (Hofstede-insights. (n.d.)b).

Examples of differences in Power Distances in the workplace are:

<b>Small Power Distance</b>	<b>Large Power Distance</b>
Subordinates expect to be consulted	Subordinates expect to be told what to do
The ideal boss is a resourceful democrat	The ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat, or “good father”
Subordinate-superior relations are pragmatic	Subordinate-superior relations are emotional

(Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov 2010, p. 76)

## **Brazil and Power Distance**

Brazil scores 69 points on the Power Distance dimension, and therefore reflects a society where people believe that hierarchy should be respected and that inequalities in society are accepted. The distribution of power justifies that people who hold a lot of power have more benefits than the people with little power. Power inequalities are both found in the family and in organizations, and in Brazil it is important to show respect for the elderly, and the boss of the company is seen as the father of a family who takes complete responsibility for both good and bad events. Brazil’s high score on the Power Distance dimension comes to show by the fact that status symbols of power are important in order to show

someone's social position and thereby allowing people to show you the respect that comes with the power.

### Denmark and Power Distance

Denmark scores 18 points on the Power Distance scale and is therefore more than 50 scores lower than Brazil. This low Power Distance score reflects a leadership style that is closer to coaching than leading, where employees are expected to be consulted rather than told what to do. In Danish workplaces employee autonomy is expected and required as it is often believed that employees have the required experience and knowledge and therefore knows best how to reach the desired goal, rather than the boss dictating this. One way Denmark's score on the Power Distance dimension comes to show is by the fact that respect at work is earned by proving your hands-on expertise rather than by your power status, and the workplaces normally have an informal atmosphere where supervisors should be accessible, and rights should be equal.

### **Uncertainty Avoidance**

The Uncertainty Avoidance dimension is concerned with a society's tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty and it expresses the degree to which people in a country feel comfortable with not knowing what the future brings. Uncertainty Avoidance is not concerning risk avoidance or not following the rules, instead it has to do with not trusting the unknown and whether people want to try to control the future or just let it happen. Countries that scores high on the Uncertainty Avoidance believe in rigid codes of behavior and belief and are not tolerant of unorthodox ideas and behavior. Countries that score low on this dimension on the other hand are more relaxed towards these things and believe that practice counts more than the principles (Hofstede-insights. (n.d.)b).

Examples of differences in Uncertainty Avoidance in the workplace are:

<b>Weak Uncertainty Avoidance</b>	<b>Strong Uncertainty Avoidance</b>
More changes of employer, shorter service	Fewer changes of employer, longer service, more difficult work-life balance
There should be no more rules than strictly necessary	There is an emotional need for rules, even if they will not work
Work hard only when needed	There is an emotional need to be busy and an inner urge to work hard

(Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov 2010, p. 217)

### Brazil and Uncertainty Avoidance

With 76 Brazil scores quite high on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension. This can be seen in the fact that the Brazilian society have a strong need for rules and detailed legal systems to structure life, and if rules cannot be kept, additional rules are created. Bureaucracy, rules and laws are important specially to protect the rights of the employees.

### Denmark and Uncertainty Avoidance

Denmark on the other hand scores 23 on this dimension which again is more than 50 scores lower than Brazil. This score reflects the fact that Danes do not have the same need for structure and predictability in their work life, which is probably due to the extensive social security benefits in Denmark. Danes are (relatively) fine with the fact that plans can change instantly, as it is a natural part of work life, and it is not uncommon to see today that Danes stay in the same job for just a few years until it’s time for a change. To stay in the same company for your entire work life, is not a common practice in Denmark, as you are not very likely to get promotions and climb up the career ladder in the same company; when it’s time for a new position you get a new job elsewhere.

### **Long-term Orientation**

The Long-term Orientation dimension deals with change and how societies view and prepare for the future. Countries that scores high on this dimension is not so set on past traditions and practices and

encourage efforts in modern education and technology as a way to prepare for the future. Countries scoring low on the other hand, prefer to maintain traditions and norms and view societal change with suspicion (Hofstede-insights. (n.d.)b).

Examples of differences in Long-term Orientation in the workplace are:

<b>Short-term Orientation</b>	<b>Long-term Orientation</b>
Freedom, rights, Achievement, and thinking for oneself	Learning, honesty, adaptiveness, accountability and self-discipline
Importance of this year’s profits	Importance of profits ten years from now
Managers and workers are psychologically in two camps	Owner-managers and workers share the same aspirations

(Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov 2010, p. 251)

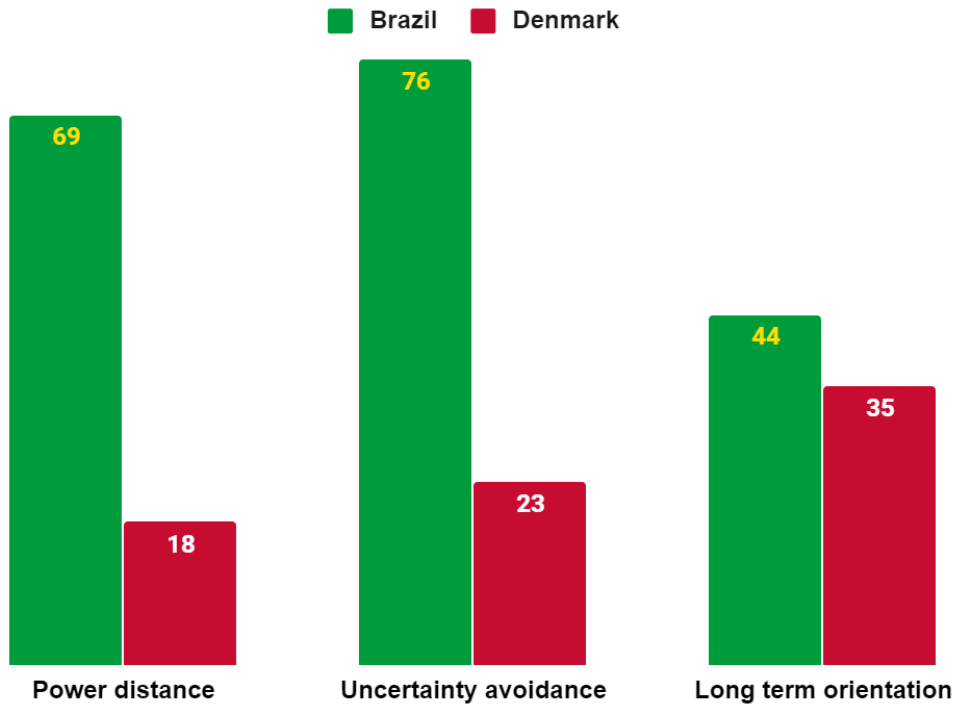
### Brazil and Long-term Orientation

Brazil scores 44 in this dimension which makes Brazil a society balanced in between Long and Short-term orientations.

### Denmark and Long-term Orientation

In this dimension, Brazil and Denmark share roughly the same values as Denmark with a score of 35 only scores nine lower than Brazil. A score of 35 indicates that Danes are quite normative in their thinking and they show respect for traditional ways of doing things. Furthermore, the focus at work is in the now and on achieving quick results.

Below is an illustration of how Denmark and Brazil lie on the three above mentioned dimensions.



(Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov 2010, p. 58, 192 & 255)

## **Simon Kragh - In-group and Out-group in Preindustrial and Traditional Societies**

Simon Kragh introduced in his article ‘preindustrial patterns in Chinese organizational culture’ how preindustrial countries have more in common than often claimed and how the idea of in-groups and out-groups define trust and moral obligations to reciprocate favors. Groups that have developed independently from each other may still share a similar culture based on whether they are preindustrial, industrializing or industrial societies. Marshall Sahlin’s concept of social distance and reciprocity is used to define the group dynamics in preindustrial cultures, Kragh describes Sahlin’s theory as such:

“Social distance is described as a set of concentric circles with the household or nuclear family at the center followed by the lineage, the village which comprises a number of more or less related members of the same clan, and the tribe which is more or less equivalent to the concept of ethnic group. At the margin of the outer circle Sahlin locates members of other tribes, who are the ‘perfect’ outsiders” (Kragh, 2011, p. 6)

These different degrees of social distance correspond to three different degrees of moral and social obligations and levels of reciprocity; generalized reciprocity, balanced reciprocity, and negative reciprocity.

The generalized reciprocity segment is found in the in-group where people are expected to voluntarily help each other without any motives. In fact, helping each other in the in-group is taken for granted and it is just expected that the recipient will return the favor whenever it is needed. In the balanced reciprocity segment, favors and exchanges are seen as ‘something for something’. When you help someone in this segment it is expected that the recipient will return the favor at some point, but not right away as delays on reciprocating gifts are enjoyed, so it doesn’t seem like a trade (Kragh, 2011, p. 7). The last segment, the negative reciprocity, it is ‘something for nothing’ as a stranger from the out-group have no moral commitment to you, and you can therefore not expect to ever get a favor in return.

Social distance influences people’s perceptions of nepotism and bribery; giving a gift or a favor to someone from your in-group appears more legitimate than when the same gift is handed over to a stranger from the out-group. Yet if you manage to get that stranger to become less of a stranger by connecting with him or her on a more personal level, it becomes more acceptable to do a favor for this person. The stranger might even feel morally obligated to return the favor one day because now he or she is all of a sudden closer to the balanced reciprocity segment than to the negative reciprocity segment.

One way to shorten social distance can therefore be through gift-giving. Giving gifts and doing favors can also be a way of creating authority; as the more you give or the bigger favors you do, the more moral obligations the recipient feel to reciprocate the gift. Ultimately if the recipient is not able to reciprocate the favor or gift due to the size of it, he or she will be in debt to the person and the power distance is now clearly defined.

Together with Africa and China, Latin America belongs to the preindustrial cultural group of societies and is therefore influenced by the in-group/out-group continuum and morals of social distance

and reciprocity. There is a general notion in Latin America, especially in Brazil, that you can't and shouldn't trust a stranger and that your closest friends and family are people you can always count on and you are expected to help each other 'no questions asked' whenever it's needed. The same notion goes for Brazilian workplaces. In Brazil workplaces are often like a big family, where the line between work and personal life is rather blurred and colleagues quickly become your close friends. Even though 'everyday life' favors and gifts are rarely so extreme that you are in dept to each other (besides to the boss), helping each other out with work or non-work related issues or doing each other favors is, especially for a newcomer, an effective and common way to move from the out-group to the in-group in a Brazilian workplace.

In-group and out-groups are typically found in societies that are passing from traditional to modern conditions; the more traditional a society is, the more the organizational behavior tends to be influenced by personal relations, that are prioritized above the formal and impersonal requirements of the organization itself. Kragh writes in his paper "NEPOTISM Organizational Behavior in Modernizing Societies." that the ideal modern organization is organized around procedures and rules which are meant to apply universally, and that the further a society moves away from being a traditional society the less influence personal relations and nepotism will have on the functioning of the organization. Kragh argues that Brazil along with other preindustrial societies belong to a category in between traditional and modern societies: "The organizations are neither fully traditional, nor are they fully modern: they are rather relatively undifferentiated and ambiguous combinations of traditional and modern elements" (Kragh, "NEPOTISM Organizational Behaviour in Modernizing Societies.", p. 3).

Since Brazil is a society transitioning from a traditional to a modern society there will be several organizational equalities to be found with the Danish modern society, but the importance of personal relations in organizations will undoubtedly be a significant difference.

## **Alfons Trompenaars - Seven Dimensions of Culture**

While Hofstede's focus lie on the societal cultures Alfons Trompenaars puts a greater focus on how countries differ from each other in organizational life and structure. Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions of Culture were identified by the two management consultants Alfons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner. They developed the model after more than 10 years of researching preferences and values of



people in several countries all around the world. As part of their research they sent out questionnaires to more than 46,000 managers in 40 different countries. Their research concluded that people from different cultures differ from one another in specific and almost predictable ways due to different values and beliefs. Much like Hofstede's cultural dimensions Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner concluded that what differentiates people from one culture compared with another is where people's preferences fall in one of the following seven dimensions:

1. Universalism vs. Particularism.
2. Individualism vs. Communitarianism.
3. Neutral vs. Affective.
4. Specific vs. Diffuse.
5. Achievement vs. Ascription.
6. Sequential time vs. Synchronous time.
7. Internal direction vs. External direction.

Four of these dimensions are particularly relevant for this paper, namely the first, third, fourth and fifth dimension.

The first dimension, Universalism vs. Particularism describes how people from cultures where the preference falls on the Universalism spectrum place a high importance on laws, rules and obligations. They try to deal with people in a fair way where rules come before relationships. Denmark is a Universalism culture.

Particularism cultures on the other hand place a high value on relationships, and people from these cultures believes that circumstances and relationships dictate the rules they live by, and how you handle a situation is very much depending on who's involved and on what's happening. Particularism cultures place more value on relationships while Universalism cultures focus more on the rules defining a given situation (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 2012, p. 63). Brazil is a Particularism culture.

The third dimension Neutral vs. Affective describes people's way of expressing emotions. In Neutral cultures reason influence people's actions more than emotions, and people from these cultures make efforts to control their emotions while in Affective cultures emotions have a bigger influence on people's actions and it is accepted and even sometimes expected to show spontaneous emotion, also in work settings. Neutral cultures are not necessarily cold or emotionally constipated, the amount of

emotion people from such cultures show is a result of the norm in society: when the norm is to control your emotions, uncontrollable joy or grief will signal very loudly. Likewise, in an Affective culture where the norm is to openly express your feelings and your emotions, your expressions will have to be signaled more loudly to be registered and to not drown in the crowd. (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 2012, p. 87). People from an Affective culture might be surprised by the lack of emotion and the “stick to the point”-attitude in a Neutral culture, while people from Neutral cultures might be overwhelmed with the amount of emotion and passion being expressed in a business setting in an Affective culture. Denmark belongs to the category of Neutral cultures while Brazil is an Affective culture.

The third dimension Specific vs. Diffuse describes your private and public sphere. People from Specific cultures are usually very persistent in keeping work and personal lives separate, and they do not believe that a relationship can or should impact your work objectives. A good relationship with work related acquaintances is of course good, but this is usually the focus after you have done business with the person. Denmark is categorized as a Specific culture.

Diffuse cultures are the complete opposite when it comes to work relations. People from such cultures usually do not have a clear line between private and work lives. When doing business in a Diffuse culture, trust is the key, and it is customary to build a good relationship before getting into business together. A person from a Specific culture might say that it is a waste of time to build a relationship first when you can just go straight to the business part, while a person from a Diffuse culture would say that it is a waste of time to start doing business before you know if you can trust the other person with your business. Brazil belongs to the category of Diffuse cultures.

The fifth dimension Achievement vs Ascription describes how people in Achievement cultures believe that worth is based on your skills and performance, and that you get your status based on your skills and what you do. Denmark is an Achievement culture. In Ascription cultures status and power is almost handed to you based on who you are, and your status rather than your skills. Status is what defines you and what should make people trust you. Brazil belongs to this category of cultures ("Trompenaars Cultural Dimensions – The 7 Dimensions of Culture", 2017).

## **The Eiffel Tower and the Family Style Corporate Culture**

Trompenaars furthermore introduced the concepts of the different corporate cultures, namely the Incubator, Guided Missile, Family and Eiffel Tower culture. In this paper the focus will be on the Family and Eiffel Tower culture as these two represents respectively the Brazilian and the Danish corporate culture.

The Family style culture is very person oriented and hierarchical. This type of organization is mostly found in Diffuse cultures as the organization is viewed as one big family where your colleagues are your friends and the leader of an organization is regarded as a caring father who has greater experience and authority compared to the employees. This organizational culture is power-oriented culture where the power and function of the leader is linked to him or her as a person and cannot easily be replaced by someone else. As Brazil belongs to the Ascription culture and scores 69 on Hofstede's Power Distance dimension, it is evident that Brazil belongs to the Family corporate culture. The pressure to perform in this type of corporation is moral and social rather than financial or legal, and to please is a reward itself (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012, p. 196).

The Eiffel Tower corporate culture is in many ways the complete opposite of the Family culture: instead of a company being one big family the Eiffel Tower is steep and narrow at the top and each higher function holds together the function beneath. Universalism cultures are usually found using this corporate culture as employees in this corporate style work best with rules, procedures, and guidelines, and get nervous in the absence of order. Additionally, the Eiffel Tower is found in Specific and Achievement cultures where work and personal lives are kept very separate and you get your status on your skills and performance and not based on who you are. In the Eiffel Tower culture, you obey the leader because it is his or her role to instruct you, and not because of who the leader is as a person. The leader as well as most other employees can easily be replaced by someone with a similar skill set as your job is just a role you take on (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012, p. 204). As Denmark is a Universalist, Specific and Achievement culture, it is evident that Denmark Belongs to the Eiffel Tower culture.

## **Edward Hall - High and Low-Context Cultures**

The anthropologist Edward T. Hall came up with the terms High-Context cultures and Low-Context cultures in 1976. The idea behind these terms is that the way we communicate with each other reflects

our cultural background and context. In some cultures, it is more common to be explicit and direct when you convey a message, and it is the speaker's responsibility to deliver a clear message primarily through verbal and written words. This type of communication is categorized as Low-Context communication. In other cultures, messages are often delivered through more indirect and non-verbal ways and the information is depending on the context, which is the listeners responsibility to understand. In this latter type of communication, it is usually necessary to read between the lines and to understand contextual clues such as tone of voice, body language etc. This communication form is categorized as High-Context communication (Nam, 2015). Denmark belongs to the category of Low-Context cultures and Brazil to the category of High-Context cultures.

### **Monochronic vs Polychronic cultures**

In addition to his theory of High and Low-Context cultures Hall also introduces the theory of Monochronic and Polychronic time which describes how cultural differences can be found in people's perceptions of time. In cultures with Monochronic time, time is linear. Events are planned and executed one at a time and punctuality and preciseness is highly appreciated. Monochronic cultures appreciate getting things done on time so that time is used efficiently and is not being wasted. Monochronic perceptions of time can be found primarily in North American and Northern European cultures.

Polychronic time, on the other hand, is characterized by multiple events happening simultaneously. In Polychronic cultures, time is viewed as more flexible and since life cannot really be predicted, schedules and planning are not of the uttermost importance. Additionally, relationships with people are usually valued more, than strictly following a schedule. Examples of Polychronic cultures are Latin American, Arabic and African cultures. Hall's concept of Monochronic and Polychronic cultures can easily be compared with Trompenaars third cultural dimension of Specific and Diffuse cultures where in Anglo-Saxon cultures relationships are often viewed as a second priority after getting the necessary business done, while in Latin cultures relationships are the primary focus.

Different cultural perceptions of efficiency, time and relationships can easily lead to conflict in the business world. The idea of being late for a meeting usually differs widely between e.g. a Danish businessperson and a Brazilian. The Danish businessperson will most likely view it as rude if the

Brazilian is late while the Brazilian will be offended by a Dane's insistence on being punctual or getting straight to business (Duranti & Di Prata, 2009).

In addition to being Monochronic and therefore very punctual cultures, Northern European countries are all Low-Context societies which are claimed to place a lot of emphasis on words which often results in simple, direct sentences where background information often is not needed, whereas Brazil is a High-Context society where people are more sensitive to contextual nuances and indications (Jacob, 2003, p. 73). When High and Low-Context societies meet, people have to be aware of their choice of words and information, as it is easy to be misunderstood. The same goes for a meeting between Polychronic and Monochronic cultures; it is easy to be offended or to be misunderstood as rude.

## **Elizabeth Plum - Cultural Intelligence**

“As organizations become more global, mergers and strategic alliances become more common, developing the skills to get the best from different cultures become a necessity rather than an option.” (Plum, Achen, Dræby, & Jensen, 2008, p. 9).

Elizabeth Plum's theory of Cultural Intelligence highlights the need for a mutual understanding and collaboration between people with different cultural backgrounds. She puts emphasis on the idea that the cultural dynamics of a situation are the same in relation to organizational, racial, national, and professional differences. Plum expresses the importance of acknowledging cultural differences as such:

“I believe that cultural difference has a greater impact on business effectiveness than we think. Our cultural backgrounds influence the way we think and act and the way we interpret each other's contributions. Our success or failure in communication depends on this competence and ultimately skill in this area affects the company's bottom line.” (Plum, 2007, p. 1)

The concept of Cultural Intelligence is essentially a skill people have (or can learn) in order to bridge cultural differences. Cultural Intelligence is about having the ability to make yourself understood and understand others across cultural differences. The most important step towards attaining Cultural Intelligence is, according to Plum, to acknowledge that we are all cultural beings and that bridging

cultural differences applies to all participants, and not just 'the other' (Plum, 2007, p. 3). Cultural Intelligence consists of three dimensions: Emotional, Cognitive and Action:

### Emotional/intercultural engagement

This dimension includes our motivation to achieve a successful inter-cultural encounter which comes from external drivers such as goals, objectives and need to have a successful cooperation. There are however also internal drivers included in this motivation, such as curiosity and fascinations of things or people that are different. This dimension is the first, and therefore most important step, it is what can turn fuel into fire and your motivation in this dimension determines whether the potential for fruitful collaboration is off to a positive or negative start.

Our feelings and impressions about someone's behavior and actions are related to our beliefs and our notion of what is the right way to act. These impressions are subjective attitudes which are based on internal values such as respect or fairness. This first aspect of Cultural Intelligence refers to your attitude towards difference, and it involves your courage to allow yourself to be changed during the intercultural situation and your ability to cope with other people's reactions when cultural misunderstandings and awkwardness occur. These external and internal drivers determine how much of an investment we are prepared to put into a situation of a cultural encounter (Plum, 2007, p. 2).

### Cognitive/cultural understanding

The cognitive or cultural understanding component is the rational and objective component. This component is based on our capacity and reason to develop the mental structures that enables us to understand the cultural encounter; it is about thinking about what is going on in the given situation and make judgments based on your framework of cultural knowledge and language.

This component consists of understanding yourself as a cultural being and understanding people with a different cultural background. This dimension therefore requires knowledge about what culture is and knowledge about the characteristics of others' cultures as well as about our own and the ability to draw on your experience from other cultural encounters.

### Action/intercultural communication

This third component is about what happens during a cultural encounter. Essentially this component is about what we decide to do based on our past experiences, our judgement of the situation, and our knowledge about our own and the other person's cultural background. This action dimension is the activity during the cultural encounter; what each participant actually does or says. It includes various types of interpersonal communication such as listening, agreeing, disagreeing, questioning, summarizing etc. as well as other skills which we have learned in our encounters with others such as body language, rules, etiquette, rituals and other techniques.

This third dimension bring the first two Cultural Intelligence dimensions into play and in doing so it creates the content of the communication. Plum describes the content of the cultural encounter as the problem to be solved or the decisions to be made (Plum, 2007, p. 2).

It is according to Plum important to learn and rely on your experience from previous encounters and existing knowledge about other people's cultures as well as being aware of your own. For instance, the culturally intelligent project manager or leader will make sure that culturally diverse project groups start out by focusing on the cultural differences and similarities and by using Cultural Intelligence methods and ideas they will be able to improve cooperation level of functioning from the very beginning of the project. The culturally intelligent leader knows that "the HOW is just as important as the WHAT, this is where Cultural Intelligence comes to the fore and delivers results." (Plum, 2007, p. 5).

### **Theory overlaps**

As the above-mentioned theories all deal with cultural differences there are of course some overlaps, though these overlaps are not as much repetitions as they are extensions and complementations of each theory.

When looking at Hofstede's cultural dimension on Power Distance that characterizes a workplace with a small power distance as a place where subordinate-superior relations are pragmatic and respect at work is earned by proving your hands-on expertise rather than by your power status, one can see the same idea being used in Trompenaars' Achievement dimension and the Eiffel Tower cooperate culture. Here you get your status based on your skills and performance and not based on who you are, and you

obey your leader because it is his or her role to instruct you, and not because of who the leader is as a person.

The same similarity can be seen in the higher end of the Power Distance dimension where a workplace is characterized as a place where subordinate-superior relations are emotional and where the ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat, or “good father”, which corresponds to Trompenaars’s Ascription cultural dimension and the Family style corporate culture where your personality and relation to employers and employees are just as important as your skills.

Following Trompenaars’ concept of the Family style corporate culture as well as his cultural dimension of Diffuse and Particularism cultures we can see that the importance of personal relations and moral obligations in organizations is also being emphasized in Kragh’s theory of in-groups and out-groups. In societies that are passing from traditional to modern conditions your colleagues quickly become part of your in-group, which means that your colleagues become part of a group of people who you know you can trust and to whom you are morally obligated to. This corresponds to Trompenaars’s theory of the workplace being like one big family and you do your best at your job because of these moral obligations rather than the expectancy of financial gain.

Family style corporate cultures are also often found in the higher end of Hofstede’s Uncertainty Avoidance dimension where employees often have an emotional need to be busy and an inner urge to work hard to be sure that they don’t disappoint the employer as it could result in your future at the company being uncertain. The Family style culture can be found in societies transitioning from a traditional to a modern society while the Eiffel Tower corporate culture is merely found in modern societies.

Besides Trompenaars’ theory of Neutral vs Affective cultures Edward Hall’s theories has no immediate connection to the organizational and group-based theories of Hofstede, Trompenaars or Kragh as Hall is concerned with how the individual from his different definitions of culture has their preferred ways of communicating and managing time. While the previous mentioned theories can be seen and experienced in the way an individual responds to colleagues, rules, orders, authority, and other matters found within the organization, Hall’s theory and Trompenaars theory of Neutral and Affective cultures can be experienced in the way the individual employee expresses himself/herself and prefers to manage his/her time while doing tasks.



Plum’s overlap with these four mentioned theories can be found in her Cognitive/cultural understanding dimension where a person aspiring to gain Cultural Intelligence needs knowledge about the characteristics of others’ cultures as well as about their own; this is where these theories can be put into use.

When starting to work together with a person from a different culture than your own, Hall’s theory might be the first noticeable difference and more relevant for coworkers to have an understanding of, while the theories of Hofstede, Trompenaars and Kragh are more relevant for the employers and managers to have a basic understanding of an employee’s notion of the various organizational matters as well as which authority/leadership style the employee have been used to.

## **Interview questions**

The interview questions are created with a deductive approach, based on the described theories. The intend of the questions is to get the interviewee’s opinion on the different hypotheses and the questions will therefore be rather closed, but still open enough for the interviewee not being able to answer with “yes” or “no” answer. The questions will be shown and explained below:

- **What were some of the first things you noticed as different/needed to get used to when you first started working in Denmark?**
- **What have been the most difficult to get used to?**

The first two questions are more open than the rest, as these two questions are asking about the interviewee’s first impressions when starting to work in Denmark, and these answers will give an understanding of which cultural difference left the strongest impressions. The intend of these two questions is also to see if the interviewees will mention some topics that relates to the chosen theories, perhaps from a different angle, which consequently can be used in the analysis of the other questions.

- **In the hiring process, how did you experience the importance on your skills and experience rather than you knowing the right people?**

This question is based on Trompenaars Achievement vs. Ascription dimension where according to these theories your worth/status in Denmark is something you achieve whereas your

worth/status in Brazil in many cases is ascribed to you based on who you are or who you know. This question also takes base in the theory of the Eiffel Tower cooperate culture being the primary cooperate culture in Denmark, where you should be hired purely based on the skills and experience you bring to the table, rather than letting nepotism influence the hiring decision. This question is placed here in the beginning as it is more natural to start asking about the hiring process early in the interview.

- **How do you experience the shorter power distance to managers and bosses here in Denmark?**

This question is aimed to explore the interviewee's view on Hofstede's Cultural Dimension of Power Distance where Brazil scores high and Denmark has a low score. According to the theories Denmark's low score on this dimension would indicate that managers and bosses in Denmark are more approachable and consult the employees rather than giving orders. With Brazil's high score on the dimension this relation to their bosses/managers in Denmark should be the complete opposite of what the interviewees have been used to.

- **How do you experience the authority level of bosses/managers in Denmark and the fact that it is generally okay to question your manager?**

This question is an extension of the previous question and seeks to further investigate the Power Distance dimension as well as Trompenaars' different corporate cultures and his 5<sup>th</sup> cultural dimension, Ascription vs Achievement. According to the theories a typical boss in a Brazilian Family style cooperate culture holds a high authority because of his/her title and because of the high score on the Power Distance dimension, the decisions and orders from a Brazilian boss should be respected and are generally not to be questioned. In a Danish Eiffel Tower cooperate culture on the other hand, the status and authority of being a boss is much lower, and as a boss it is your job to delegate tasks and consult your subordinates with these tasks, as it is most often the belief that your employees knows best how to handle their tasks. Entering an Eiffel Tower corporate culture should therefore be quite a culture shock for the interviewees as these two corporate cultures are almost as different as they can get.

- **How do you experience the clear distinction between work life and private life in Denmark and that your colleagues are not necessarily your friends?**

This question aims to further explore the change from a Family style cooperate culture as well as changing from a Diffuse to a Specific culture. According to the theories, in a Diffuse culture, like Brazil, your colleagues are often your close friends and the distinction between your private and your work life is very blurred. It should therefore be a big change for the interviewees to enter a Danish Specific culture where your work life as well as work relations are clearly separated from your private life. The aim of the question is furthermore to touch upon the concept of in-groups and out-groups where, according to the theories, your colleagues are your close friends and part of your in-group and therefore someone you can trust more, while in Denmark this is not the case; your colleagues are just people you work with.

- **How do you experience the notion that Danes prefer getting straight to business rather than starting with polite conversation to maintain a good relationship with the people they do business/work with?**

This question functions as an extension of the previous question. Here Trompenaars' theory of Specific and Diffuse cultures is being explored even more. According to the theories, a Brazilian employee from a Diffuse culture might say that maintaining a good relationship is more important than getting straight to the work in question. A Dane from a Specific culture on the other hand might say that it is a waste of time to build and maintain a work relationship when you can just go straight to the business part. The aim of this question is also to get a sense of Trompenaars' theory of Danes being more neutral in their way of expressing emotions and to see if this clashes with the Brazilian employees from an Affective culture. Lastly, this question furthermore touches upon the in-group out-group theory where in Brazil it is important that you get to know the person you're about to work with so this person moves from the out-group of being a complete stranger to someone closer to your in-group, and thereby raise the level of trust.

- **How do you experience the idea in Denmark that people you don't know can generally be trusted unless they prove otherwise?**

This question is designed to further touch the topic of in-groups and out-groups where you have a high level of trust to your colleagues (your in-group) and no trust at all to people you don't know (the out-group), which according to Kragh is manifested in the Brazilian organizational life and business style. Since the organizational style in Denmark is influenced by Denmark being a modern society, the same notion of not trusting strangers should not be evident to the same extend as in Brazil, hence the phrasing of the question.

- **To what extend do you experience that rules, guidelines and obligations are more strictly followed in Denmark compared to Brazil?**

This question aims to explore the idea of Danish organizations being part of a Universalism culture as well as the Eiffel Tower corporate culture where, according to the theories, rules and obligations are weighed higher than relationships and circumstantial influences. This is not the case for a Brazilian from a Particularism Family Style corporate culture where circumstances and relationships can dictate the extend to which someone chooses to follow rules and guidelines.

- **How do you experience the way that Danes use less details in their communication style?**

This question is based in Hall's theory about High- and Low-Context cultures where Brazilians belong to the category of High-Context cultures. In High-Context cultures understanding a message depends a lot on verbal as well as non-verbal clues such as body language, who is speaking or in which context something is being said, so to avoid misunderstandings when conveying a written message, it is often necessary to describe issues in great detail. It should therefore be very different for the High-Context interviewees to enter into a Low-Context culture, where you are not expected to interpret a message depending on non-verbal clues, so explaining everything in great detail is not always necessary; what is being said is what is supposed to be understood. As in one of the previous questions the aim of this question is also to gain insight in Trompenaars' theory of Danes being more neutral in their way of expressing emotions and to see if this have left any impressions on the Brazilian employees from an Affective culture.

- **How do you experience the typical workstyle of only doing one thing at a time and not doing several tasks at once?**

This question is based in Hall's second theory of Monochronic and Polychronic cultures where Polychronic cultures like Brazil often work with several tasks overlapping, as time is viewed as more flexible. According to the theories this also comes to show in the fact that Brazil is a Diffuse culture, where work life and relationships overlap with your personal life and relationships, so keeping tight plans and schedules are often not of the uttermost importance. Additionally, in Diffuse cultures relationships with people are usually valued more, than strictly following a schedule. Thus, entering a Monochronic culture like Denmark could then be quite a culture shock for the interviewees, as people in Monochronic cultures appreciate getting things done on time so that time is used efficiently and is not being wasted. According to the theories of Denmark being a Specific culture, this also results in minimized chit chat and less focus on maintaining good work-relationships, as work related issues and getting things done in time holds a higher value than maintaining good work-relationships.

- **How do you experience the tendency to change jobs fairly often in Denmark?**

Here the aim is to look at the interviewee's impressions of working in a society that scores very low on Hofstede's Uncertainty Avoidance dimension. Brazilians come from a society with a fairly high score on this dimension which means that Brazilians generally have a strong need for predictability and structure in their work life, and therefore don't necessarily have the need or desire to change jobs as often as Danes do.

- **In Danish companies, how do you experience the need/desire to try out new ways/methods vs. sticking to traditional ways?**

This question seeks to explore the interviewee's impression of Hofstede's Long-term Orientation dimension and see if the interviewees agree that Denmark and Brazil have very little differences on this spectrum.

- **Workwise, what are the main things you think Denmark could learn from Brazil and the other way around?**

This question seeks to understand which cultural differences at work had the most positive impressions and where the interviewees see need for improvement. This question is like the first two questions designed to get the interviewees' opinions without being guided too much by the questions, which will give them a chance to communicate something they perhaps didn't have a chance to earlier in the interview.

## Methods

The chosen method for data collection is to do qualitative research interviews, as I am interested in people's opinions on certain topics. I will be interviewing Brazilians who have moved to Denmark to work, and the questions will be based on the above-mentioned cultural theories. The aim with the interviews is to confirm or contradict some of the theoretical aspects that set the frame for this paper, which consequently should raise aspects for analysis and discussion.

When you want someone's opinion on a topic, a research interview is a great tool, while If you want to research human behavior, a field study would be a more suiting approach. A research interview is in many ways similar to a normal conversation, but the main difference is that the interviewer decides the topic to be talked about. The point of a qualitative research interview is to gain insight into different themes in the everyday lives of the interviewees.

Research interviews are often very openly structured and should have open and neutral questions where the interviewee is answering and describing as he or she wishes, yet it is the interviewer who sets the framework with the opening question. There are no standard procedures for how to do a research interview, but there are however some standard techniques that can be used to help the interviewer make deliberate decisions regarding the method of the interview. Simon Kvale defined in his book '*Interview - det kvalitative forskningsinterview som håndværk*' seven necessary stages of an interview:

- **Setting the theme.** Formulate the purpose of the research and the perception of the theme being investigated before the interviews begin. The *why* should be clear before you go to the *how*.

- **Design.** Before the interview takes place, you should plan the design of the research regarding these seven phases in order to know what you wish to find out and which limitations you might have.
- **Interviewing.** Do the interviews with your research topic in mind and be aware of any limitations or challenges you might encounter during the interviews.
- **Transcribing.** Make the interview material ready for analysis, which normally involves transcribing the interview.
- **Analyzing.** Decide based on the purpose and theme of the research how you will analyze the interviews.
- **Verification.** Determine the reliability and validity of the interview results. Reliability is concerned with how consistent the results are and validity determines if the interviews indeed investigate the chosen theme.
- **Reporting.** Combine all the above and communicate the results and the chosen methods in a scientific manner (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015p. 154).

I will continuously throughout the whole writing period take these seven steps into use.

## Transcription

Challenges will always occur when it is time to transcribe the final interview data, as it is not possible to transcribe expressions and tone intonations, so how do you best write down what is going on? The first part of analyzing of the interviews starts when deciding how the audio should be transcribed (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015p. 238). Should it be transcribed exactly as the interviewee expresses it, even if the grammar etc. is wrong? Or should it instead be formulated in a way that is easier to read? Should every single word be transcribed or only what seems relevant to what was asked?

Due to the amount and length of the interviews I have chosen to “boil it down” to what seems to be more relevant to the questions asked, and I will therefore also not transcribe fill words such as “um”, “but, um”, “hm” and so on.

## **Possible challenges and limitations**

Since I (a Dane) will be interviewing Brazilians, there is always a risk of misunderstandings and miscommunications while conducting the interviews due to language barriers. However, the fact that the interview will be conducted in English instead of using a translator or translating the interview afterwards, will minimize the risk of misinterpretation

Another aspect that could influence the interview, is concerning cultural differences. One cultural difference in particular, that possibility could have an influence on the interview is regarding the before-mentioned theory of High- and Low-Context communication styles. This theory implies that I, a Dane, am from a Low-Context culture, and therefore only give the most necessary information in a conversation, whereas Brazilians are from a High-Context culture and are often very colorful in their storytelling and expressions. This however should not be an issue when the interviewer's primary role is to keep the questions as neutral as possible while the point of the interview is to get the whole story from the interviewee; the more vivid the better. But if the roles were reversed it could create some miscommunication

## **Analyzing the interviews**

As the interview questions are all based on the above-mentioned theories, the analysis will be based on the interview answers and how they relate to the theories. The interviews will be analyzed question by question by using quotes and by referring to the different respondents. As some questions have theoretical overlaps, it is likely that the answers will have similar overlaps and some questions might therefore be analyzed together.



## **Analysis of interview responses**

This section will provide the analysis of the interviews where the interview answers will be compared to the cultural theories provided earlier. The objective is to identify the extent to which the answers corresponds to what has been defined in the theories, as well as discuss topics discovered during the interviews that was not necessarily covered by the theories.

### **The Hiring Process: Entering the Eiffel Tower and Achievement vs. Ascription cultures**

The analysis of the question *“In the hiring process, how did you experience the importance on your skills and experience rather than you knowing the right people?”* will give an insight in the change from a Family style corporation in an Ascription culture, where your status, knowing the right people and who you are as a person can have a great impact whether you will get hired or not. In an Eiffel Tower corporation in an Achievement culture your worth is based on your skills and performance, and this should also be the basis for the decision of hiring you.

The three PhD students (Appendix A, B and C) did not go through a typical hiring process, and they therefore didn’t feel they had the necessary basis to answer this question, thus the question is not included in the transcripts.

As stated in the theory section, your personality and knowing the right people in an Achievement culture should not have any impact in the hiring process. However, some interviewees got their job in Denmark because they knew someone, and some interviewees found it quite difficult to get a job in Denmark, because they did not have any contacts:

“(Isabela) I think it's a universal thing that you know someone that can give a reference for you. And I think that's one of the big challenges that Igor had when he was trying to look for a job. He had no references. I think it's a universal thing that if you have someone to put in a word for you and to give you a good reference it puts you in a better place when you are trying a position.”  
(Appendix G, p. 9)

The overall impression however was still that the recruiting process in Denmark was very fair, and a lot of the aspects of Brazil being an Ascription culture and the hiring process often being influenced by nepotism was confirmed in the quotes below:

“In Brazil usually first you have to be recommended by someone. That's the first thing. Otherwise they don't usually, I mean of course they open positions, but they are not going to check that, you know. Because they are going to have someone like to recommend someone to them.” (Appendix D, p. 3)

“I believe there a lot of people that got to their position by some contacts so. And those who are like appointed for some reason they are very difficult to move. Even if you are really good it is very difficult to go over them.” (Appendix F, p. 1)

“(Igor) I've worked for the government in Brazil and there it's a lot of let's say horizontal. You know because there are so many people with positions that are just because they're friends of someone. So, in Brazil there's a lot of that. That you're not hired because you're good you're hired because you're friends with someone. (...) The difference in Brazil is these personal things of your life how you go by your daily life outside of work can influence if you get hired or not. (...) In Brazil I haven't experienced this so much, but I have heard from other people that when you are being interviewed, they go into personal questions, and that will dictate if you're going to be hired or not. To the point of beliefs, religious beliefs, if you're not from a specific religious belief from that company you're not going to get hired. (...) it's not the rule, but that does happen in Brazil. And I wouldn't think that here if you're not a part of the church that the manager of the company goes to, you're not going to get hired because of that. (Appendix G, p. 9 -11)

“Skills are very important, but it also counts a lot how much you can be trusted by the person putting you in that position. Someone that won't be promoted to a boss is someone who is not trusted, even if it is a good person. (...) I don't know how it works here, but I don't think that someone necessarily needs to have a close relationship with a boss when hiring him/her. I think here they would only look on the competencies of that person, but in Brazil they would also try

to get to know that person before promoting. It’s not normal to give a boss title in Brazil to someone who you haven’t talked with and gone out with, met that person in social occasions, and know what to expect of that person on a social level.” (Appendix E, p. 2)

Another thing that was mentioned about the hiring process was how different it was for some of the interviewees that interpersonal skills held such a great importance, both when making your resumé, but also during the interviews:

“I went through a hiring process and based on that I think it was very fair a very fair process, understanding all the competencies and the skills especially my company they have a very structured process of understanding your skills and interpersonal skills and also like all those tasks like logic tasks and so on. (Appendix H, p. 1)

“The recruitment process here it's like very unique. I don't know if it is similar in other European countries, but I think Denmark is very different in comparison with Brazil. I would never ever have learned that by myself like I had to. Because it's so focused on personality and how you are in the work environment. It's like it's the same weight as your technical skills. And actually, they don't care about that because everybody has a PhD and “blah blah blah” because of all the people that apply they have the technical skills. So, they are more worried about: “do I want to work with this person?”. And this in Brazil would never happen, ever. So even, you know small things like adding your hobbies in the CV and have a picture in the cover letter, try to show how you are as a person in a work environment, like in a more personal way. So, in Brazil people would just think: “what is this? This person is not professional!”. It's completely crazy. “(Appendix D, p. 2)

When looking at these comments about interpersonal skills being in focus in the hiring process it would at first sight seem like the hiring process of a Family style corporation, where who you are counts almost as much as your skills. However being considered for a position in a Family style culture has more to do with nepotism based on who you know, and how well you connect with the interviewer; like Igor described about having the same religious beliefs or Marcelo describing how it is customary to get

to know someone in a social setting before hiring him/her in an important position. These are the typical traits in Diffuse cultures like Brazil; you need to see if you can trust this person before doing business with him/her. By socializing with or already knowing the person in question you raise the level of trust by moving the person closer to your in-group and further away from being a complete stranger in the out-group, and it will therefore be a safer choice for hiring.

In an Eiffel Tower corporate culture your worth (and desire to hire you) is based on your skills and experience instead of how well you connect with your interviewer or who you know in the company, and interpersonal skills can be determined through different tests and tasks depending on what is needed for the position. The focus on interpersonal skills in the interviews is therefore not odd for an Eiffel Tower culture.

The notion that Brazil is an Ascription culture where nepotism is present in most companies as who you are and who you know influences your chances of getting hired, was confirmed in many of the interview answers. It was described that in order to get a job in Brazil in most cases you need to know someone in the company to be even considered, and the people in high positions appointed by others with high statuses are difficult to go over. Denmark being a Description culture was partly confirmed; on the one hand the interviewees felt the hiring process to be more fair in Denmark and your status and personal connection with the person hiring had less influence in the hiring process, but on the other hand it was difficult for many of the interview respondents to get an interview, because they had no connections in the companies they applied for. Being in an Ascription culture also defines the level of trust status gives you and to what extent your title alone gives you power. This will be analyzed in some of the interview questions further down

## **Power distance and Cooperate Culture**

The analysis of the questions: *“How do you experience the authority level of bosses/mangers in Denmark and the fact that it is generally okay to question your manager?”* and *“How do you experience the shorter power distance to mangers and bosses here in Denmark?”* will be analyzed together, as the two questions are extensions of each other and have theoretical overlaps and naturally the interviewees responses to these two questions overlaps as well.

The general responses to these questions about power distance and cooperate culture was, as expected, that the interviewees were quite surprised with the informality at work and how approachable their managers/bosses are, as well as the high level of independence managers gives their employees. None of the participants gave answers that contradicted the theories behind these two questions, however two of the interviewees (Appendix B & C) who were both PhD students, didn't feel that they would be able to answer the question regarding power distance as they didn't have anything to compare with from Brazil and because they didn't feel it would give a proper impression to merely compare their supervisors in Denmark with their Brazilian supervisors. The question of power distance is therefore left out of those transcripts as it was not relevant to ask them.

The notion that Brazil ranks high on the Power Distance dimension becomes clear in the fact that one thing many interviewees had troubles getting used to upon arriving in Denmark, was the different way to approach their bosses and the respect (or lack of) around the status of their bosses.

Fernanda describes how it in the beginning was unnatural for her to call her boss by the first name: "One thing that was very strange was how informal the environment was. Calling my boss by the first name and everybody by the same, I was kind of embarrassed actually, in the beginning to call him by his name only instead of sir." (Appendix A, p. 2). Ana describes the same experience: "You know you have to call people sir (in Brazil), you never called them by the first name, if they are at least two levels above you. And in emails you always have to say sir if it's a doctor you have to say doctor, professor blah blah blah. So, it's never like here: "Hej Lars", this would never happen." (Appendix D, p. 7). The same goes for Alfredo: "At uni it was very different and weird that for example you don't call professors or teachers for professors. In Brazil you always use that treatment and sir and ma'am and all that kind of stuff. (Appendix F, p. 2)

Fernanda also describes in her interview how she really tried, but never really got used to the informal work environment:

"The first time I saw him (her boss) at work, wearing shorts and sandals I was in shock, I was like "what is going on here?". People said: "It's okay you can do that". But I can't do that in Brazil! So, I wanted to get that habit, but I couldn't! I got dressed but I felt too embarrassed and I was not going to work wearing shorts and then I changed my clothes." (Appendix A, p. 2)

She furthermore describes how she still haven't gotten used to the shorter power distance and relaxed approach to her boss: "I keep some distance for the respect and hierarchy, but I know that I didn't need to do that, but I don't know because he was my boss and much older and I am not at his level" (Appendix A, p. 2). The notion that respect and authority in Brazil is ascribed to you based on your title, but also on your age is confirmed here in Fernanda's quote, and is furthermore confirmed in Ana's description of her role as a young manager in Brazil:

"And in the end when I was hired, I had some technicians that were my mom's age like 55-60 is and I was twenty-seven, I think. And then I was the boss of this group of twelve technicians. And actually, you arrive in a place like that and they already don't like you. One of the first things I heard in my first day was that a technician told me: "I'm not gonna follow orders for you. You are younger than my daughter" (...) So I remember I said: "I'm not going to be your boss we're going to work together. You have your part in this process. And I can't do that. I'm just here to work with you and finish what we have to finish so that patients can get the treatment." And for you probably is like: "Yeah of course." You know here everybody talks like that but there it was like: "Wow". Because I could be like: "OK. You have to respect me. I could just complain to my boss you know, and you could get her fired. And sometimes that would be easier. That would be the first thing a Brazilian would think to do because a Brazilian would think: "What? I have studied to get here!"" (Appendix D, p. 3)

Ana's response to this given conflict was to tell the employees that they are in this together and that they each have their part in the process, which shows that her approach as a manager was more similar to the approach of a manager in a Family style corporation where the authority of the boss is achieved often by being a resourceful democrat rather than giving orders for the employees to follow blindly. The fact that this didn't appear to be the natural response of managers in Brazil shows that the expected management style and reaction to situations like that would be to assert your status as a manager, and perhaps fire the employee in question.

Alfredo confirms this notion of how in Brazil, your status is ascribed to you and how your job title holds a very high importance:

“There is this whole thing about status, how clear they make that in Brazil. The job title is important, the title itself already puts you in a hierarchy level, and in Brazil I think you respect that much more. You wouldn't go straight to these people that are much higher than you, you definitely respect the hierarchy more. You don't really feel like you have the openness to just you know, talk to people higher up in the hierarchy”. (appendix F, p. 2)

Like Alfredo, Marcelo also argues that the image and status of the boss in Brazil is important, and needs to be respected:

“I think here the distance is small. Anyone is comfortable talking with anyone, and disagree, publicly disagree. In Brazil we can disagree, but you avoid public conflict, because the image of the boss is important, that the boss is having respect. It doesn't fit nicely to expose the boss in Brazil. Because it is part of his authority to be respected. So, people don't want to expose the boss in this sense of publicly disagreeing with him in a hard way. (...) There were cases where I could be in a situation where I could see people arguing with the boss, in a meeting. And that was just normal.” (Appendix E, p. 2-3)

Like Marcelo, Leticia similarly noticed the fact that in her Danish workplace, it is fine to disagree with the boss: “Something I constantly hear from my manager for example is: “I would be happy if you prove me the contrary” which I think is quite interesting because it's an invitation for me to challenge him or her right.” (Appendix H, p. 2)

Ana also describes the way that her boss is much more approachable, and less status oriented compared to Brazil:

“Another thing in Brazil is also that the offices are never combined. Here we have the CEO in the same office as us because we have an open office style. And this would never happen in Brazil. The boss is always in the best room and not accessible. Here I meet the CEO at the coffee machine and then we talk and make jokes and so on, this would never happen in Brazil.” (appendix D, p. 7)

As stated in the theory section Brazil ranks high on the Power Distance dimension and belongs to the Ascription category of cultures which means that your status is ascribed to you and is what defines you and what should make people trust you. The hierarchical status and authority in a Family style corporate culture is what gives the leader respect from the employees and as the “father of the family”, the power and function of the leader is ascribed to him or her as a person and cannot easily be replaced by someone else. The leader is therefore generally not to be questioned or perhaps even approached without any good reason. Instead, the leader is the one approaching the employees to check up on the work or order new tasks to be done, rather than consulting them. This way of being consulted by your manager in the Danish Eiffel Tower culture rather than being given orders was mentioned in several interviews:

“But in general, I feel like the managers here they interfere less in your work. They allow you to work on your own, very independently. You have your tasks and you can work on that. I feel like in Brazil there are more every day following up in the sense that the manager is closer to the people working and they want to know more what is happening. (...) I personally like to have more independence like I have in Denmark because the less time I spend telling some manager what I am doing, which most likely he won't understand anyhow, the better. It kind of throws you out of your concentration.” (Appendix E, p. 3)

“When I moved in the beginning, I remember my manager direct manager coming and telling me: “I am fine if you don't hear from me in a while this means that things are fine. You know your job, you're responsible for this part of the business so just keep doing your work you know much better than I do about your region.” And that was strange for me. (...) For example, in Brazil when I was a people manager right, I had to know in deep what people that worked with me were doing so that I could give them the correct guidance. Because it's also part of our culture that you have a go to person right. They came to me to know how to do that and then I would figure it out. Here it's more like you find someone around that knows and then you figure it out together. “(Appendix H, p. 2).



“In terms of priorities this was difficult for me in the beginning. But I think this would be the same. I just think here, people are so relaxed. Because in Brazil, basically when you have a boss, he just tells you what you have to do. It's very difficult for you to decide how you do things. And it's always this nerve-wracking feeling, pushing you like “Well, what about this report? What about this blah blah blah?”. And here in Denmark it's basically like: “You know, you know your job.” They already assume you know your job you're going to deliver in time, and you don't have someone all the time pushing you. (...) I think it's really difficult for me in terms of budget. I feel like that I can't decide you know on spending budget without talking with someone else. And this was something I had to learn, and the kind of like research manager had to say like: “OK, up to this you can spend. You don't have to ask me every time”. Because I always want a confirmation that I can do that and that someone is aware I'm going to buy this.” (Appendix D, p. 4)

In these quotes it becomes clear that the interviewees have been used to working in organizations where it is the manager's responsibility to know everything that the employees are working with, and have deep enough knowledge on the various subjects to be able to give out the correct orders of what needs to be done. This is a typical trait in the Family style corporate culture, especially in a country like Brazil that ranks so high on the Power Distance dimension: employees expect to be told what to do and employers do not expect to be questioned in their rulings.

Likewise, the interviewees' clear surprise with the informality, approachableness of bosses, high independence at work and less importance of status in their Danish workplaces confirms that they have entered into an Eiffel Tower corporation in an Ascription culture ranking low on the Power Distance dimension.

Another thing that clearly separates the Family style corporate culture from the Eiffel Tower is that in Family style cultures and cultures ranking high on the Power Distance dimension, the subordinate-superior relations are often emotional. This is something both Isabela and Leticia have observed when being asked about the shorter power distance in Denmark:

“I actually have a very interesting thing to tell you because when I arrived here, my manager was a very old friend of mine from Brazil. And then afterwards I got a Danish manager and I think it's so much better to have a Danish manager than to have a Brazilian manager because they are

very black and white. If they like your job, they will tell you if they don't like they will not tell you there is no misunderstanding. You know what I mean, there is no emotion involved in this, so I like it better to work for Danes than to work for the Brazilians. (...) It's clear to me that my Danish manager values me for my work and values me for what I can add to the company. On the other hand when I had the Brazilian friend sometimes I would get a blurred message like: is she valuing me because she has some friendship with me or is it because I'm doing a good job or is she going to be able to tell me if I need to improve something? So, it was always a blurred message. But I really enjoy working with the Danish management.” (appendix G, p. 4)

Isabela's description of the relationship with her Brazilian manager compared to her new Danish manager are clear examples of a manager from a Family style culture where relations easily become personal and a manager from an Eiffel Tower culture where the employer-employee relationship is more pragmatic.

“I can compare it with my supervisor in Brazil in my master's. I tried to have a very straightforward professional relationship with her. But in Brazil everything becomes a little bit personal with time. You become close to people and it becomes very personal. And I think yeah with my supervisor there in Brazil, I also had to gain her trust. And like show to her that I was a good student so she would accept me as her student for the master's thesis. (...) And then I sent her an email and asked her. And she said “well but I don't know you, so we have to get to know each other. We have to get to know each other before I become your supervisor”. And then I started having classes with her. So, when I was at her classes I was trying to be a very good student to show to her that it was a good student and trying to kind of impress her, kind of like a mating thing you know like if you're two animals and you are having a mating dance. You have to do that with supervisors in Brazil you have to kind of show them that you think they are important people and you're a smart person and you have to kind of have this, we call this dating them. You have to date them before you get married to them. So, I kind of had to impress her for a while and then after I did a lot of impressing for a few weeks then she sent me an e-mail: “oh do you want to come to my office?”. Then I was approved. Then she was like: “do you want to come to my office and talk about your intentions as a researcher?” Then I went to her office and

she asked me: “OK what are you all about?” and I was like: “I want to do this and this type of research and this is what I'm interested in” and she was like: “yeah, OK. Then read these two articles and write something for me.” And then I was kind of approved. (...) And then there was a colleague like a classmate of mine. She did the same thing that I did. She went to the first professor and the first professor told her to go to our professor. And she didn't do the impressing part. She was just very quiet in class, she was shy, I think. And then our professor didn't email her inviting her to come. So, she was without a supervisor for a while” (Appendix C, p. 4)

Leticia's description is like Isabela's description a great representation of a manager in a Family style culture where, as Leticia said: “everything becomes a little bit personal with time”. It is furthermore a good example of a Diffuse culture, as Leticia's supervisor wanted/needed to get to know her before she would agree to be her supervisors, and the fact that she entered into a Specific culture became evident in her communication with her new supervisor:

“I have Danish supervisors and one of them... So, the story is when I was here in Denmark for the summer course, I e-mailed a couple of professors. And I met with my first supervisor. And I told him what I was studying, and I said that I wanted to do a PhD. He said: “OK. Let's do this!” Then he just accepted it at the first conversation. He didn't even know me.” (Appendix C, p. 5)

The answers to the two interview questions “*How do you experience the authority level of bosses/managers in Denmark and the fact that it is generally okay to question your manager?*” and “*How do you experience the shorter power distance to managers and bosses here in Denmark?*” both confirmed Brazil as a Diffuse culture where it is customary to build a good relationship before getting into business together and the line between private and work lives and relations are often blurred. This was clearly shown when Leticia talked about her Brazilian supervisor and how she would not agree to become her supervisor before they knew each other better. Isabela's story about how her relationship with her former Brazilian manager was more personal, and that she would get confused whether her manager liked her work because she liked her, or purely based on her work. Equally the interviews with Isabela and Leticia also confirmed Denmark as a Specific culture, as Isabela experienced her new manager as more “black

and white” where no personal things got involved in the professional relationship between the two, and Leticia’s supervisor agreed to supervise her, even though “he didn't even know me.” (Appendix C, p. 5).

The interviewees and above mentioned quotes confirmed the fact that in the Diffuse Family style corporate culture the personal connections marginalizes the importance of bureaucracy and official guidelines, while in the Specific Eiffel Tower corporation the bureaucracy and guidelines marginalizes the importance of personal connections.

The two interview questions also confirmed Brazil as an Ascription culture with primarily Family style cooperate cultures where your status as a boss is what should make people trust you and your judgement is not to be questioned. This became evident in the way that several interviewees described how it is not nice to challenge your boss, or publicly disagree as the image of the boss in Brazil is very important. Likewise, the interviewees’ surprise with the lack of authority/respect around their bosses confirmed Denmark as an Achievement culture and it moreover confirmed Denmark’s low score on the Power Distance dimension as well as the corporate culture being that of an Eiffel Tower. This became clear in the way that all of the participants were surprised with the accessibility of their bosses, the way that they were being consulted rather than being given orders and the notion that questioning your boss is generally accepted:

- “There were cases where I could be in a situation where I could see people arguing with the boss, in a meeting. And that was just normal.” (Appendix E, p. 2),
- “Because in Brazil, basically when you have a boss, he just tells you what you have to do. It's very difficult for you to decide how you do things. And it's always this nerve-wracking feeling, pushing you like “Well, what about this report? What about this blah blah blah?”. And here in Denmark it’s basically like: “You know, you know your job.” (Appendix D, p. 4)
- “Something I constantly hear from my manager for example is: “I would be happy if you prove me the contrary” which I think is quite interesting because it's an invitation for me to challenge him or her right.” (Appendix H, p. 2)

## **Diffuse Family Style Culture and Specific Eiffel Tower Culture**

As in the previous section the analysis of the questions: *How do you experience the clear distinction between work life and private life in Denmark and that your colleagues are not necessarily your friends?*

and “*How do you experience the notion that Danes prefer getting straight to business rather than starting with polite conversation to maintain a good relationship with the people they do business/work with?*” will be analyzed together, as the two questions are extensions of each other and have theoretical overlaps and consequently the interviewees responses to these two questions overlaps as well. These two questions aim to further explore the change from a Family style corporation to an Eiffel Tower corporation. Additionally, the questions will provide a deeper insight in the change from an Affective and Diffuse to a Specific and Neutral culture and how the notion of in-groups and out-groups holds less importance in Denmark compared to Brazil.

Similar to the previous section, three of the interviewees (Appendix A, B & C) didn't feel that they could properly answer the question: *How do you experience the notion that Danes prefer getting straight to business rather than starting with polite conversation to maintain a good relationship with the people they do business/work with?*. Since they were all PhD students, they either didn't have anything to compare with from Brazil or they felt that it was more relevant to answer if they worked in a more business-oriented organization, and not a university.

However, even though Leticia (Appendix C) didn't give an answer to this question, her story about how her Brazilian supervisor preferred that they got to know each other before deciding to be her supervisor also answered this question, as it confirmed the theory of Brazil being a Diffuse culture and it furthermore touched upon the in-group out-group theory where in Brazil it is important that you get to know the person you're about to work with so this person moves from the out-group of being a complete stranger to someone closer to your in-group, and thereby raise the level of trust.

When asked about the clear distinction between work and private life in Denmark, many interviewees mentioned the working hours and how they felt that in Denmark it is almost weird to stay longer at work:

“When I arrived there, it was summer I was fascinated by people at four/four thirty sitting in the bar having a drink or going to the beach. I really liked it.” (Appendix A, p. 4).

“It was my first week, and I was at the office at five thirty and a Danish colleague came to my office and he was like: “What are you doing here? Are you going to stay here all night?” And I'm like: “what?” because in Brazil I used to work until 7 or 8 p.m. and then this guy thought it was

very strange that I was there at five thirty. So, I was like “what is going on here?” (Appendix C, p. 2).

“(Isabela) It was very difficult because I was used to coming home very late every day and not having a lot of time during the weekend. So, I didn't really know what I like to do in my free time because I didn't have free time. So, it was a learning curve on the opposite way because I felt very bored the first six months” (Appendix G, p. 3)

These quotes show the interviewees clear surprise with the Danish work-life balance which could be a representation of the clear line between work and private life and therefore the change from a Diffuse to a Specific culture. It is, however, even more a representation of Brazil's fairly high score on the Uncertainty Avoidance scale, as the need to work hard seems to be a moral obligation, which is also typical in Family style organizations:

“This was hard for me to get used to because when I left at four, I felt guilty. I was like "people are going to think that I have no responsibility, I am not taking my work seriously" so I was trying to leave at six, sometimes I stayed at university until eight. **But who could see that you stayed then?** I don't know, I just felt really bad.” (Appendix A, p. 4).

“So, for example my supervisor from Brazil, he used to go on Saturdays and Sundays to the university to write papers and to write documents and stuff like this. While my supervisor here he has his private life, so the weekend is more like for himself.” (Appendix B, p. 3)

“I think people in Brazil are like obsessed with work but not as productive as here. So, they're like “yeah let's work and work and work and work”. **What would happen if you said I want to go home at three thirty (in Brazil)?** That would be very bad. (...) My colleagues would look at me like: “are you crazy?” Everyone would think that's crazy. And I was already like that because I was doing my master's and working at the same time and that is not a very common thing in Brazil. Because you have to work so much in Brazil, usually people only work or only do their master's.” (Appendix C, p. 2)

“(Isabela) In Brazil we work a lot. I remember when we moved, right before we moved, I would work from 8:00 in the morning until 6:00 p.m. every day. The formal hours, and I would usually have to work in the weekends and some holidays. So, it's very different. (...) It is expected, and it looks good for you, if you put more hours in. So, you are a good employee if you work extra. And I think that's another difference I saw here. Because if you put extra hours it doesn't mean anything. It doesn't mean that you're going to be valued more.” (Appendix G, p.3)

“I don't work as much as I did in Brazil. In Brazil there were sometimes in my life where I would work from eight in the morning until eight at night.” (Appendix H, p. 5)

Here it becomes clear that the pressure to perform and work hard/long hours is moral and social rather than financial or legal which is a typical trait in the Family style culture. Similarly also be connected to Brazil's high score on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension where there is an emotional need to be busy and an inner urge to work hard, because as Isabela (Appendix G) said: “There is always someone looking at you. So, there is always competition. You don't do it well there is someone else in line.” (Appendix G, p. 7).

Being a hard worker in Brazil is expected of you to impress your employer and be able to keep your job, and in some cases, it can even be seen a weakness if you're not able to handle your job:

“(Isabela) If you have a stress symptom in Brazil, it's a sign of failure and weakness. It says that you are not handling your job well or you're not capable of that. And that's how it's treated. So, people don't really show it. (...) when I think about it today I think, I've had many episodes of stress when I was working in Brazil. Because I had many situations where I would go home and I had a heart palpitation and I had sleepless nights because I was thinking about work and the phone would ring and I would get panicked because I knew it was work. So, when I came to Denmark and I started hearing about it stopped, I'm pretty sure I've had many episodes.” (Appendix G, p. 6)

“(Igor) I still have difficulties like accepting this thing with the stress of others here because I still see it as weakness because like: “What you cannot do this task and you have to stop six months?” this is for me is like bullshit. I understand that is important, but I have the Brazilian part in me that keeps saying: “That’s bullshit”. (Appendix G, p. 7)

Objectively it can seem like one of the easiest cultural adaptations to work shorter hours and stress yourself less and you all the sudden have time to “be bored” as Isabela (Appendix G) mentioned or time to get a beer at 16.30 as Fernanda (Appendix A) mentioned. One thing however, that was an unexpected discovery is that in the eyes of a Brazilian worker, the lack of work pressure in Denmark can almost be problematic: “(Igor) But people here sometimes when you put a little pressure, then they are like: “Oh, I'm going to talk to my manager because I'm gonna get stressed” and it looks like they're like pushing away with the excuse of the stress.” (Appendix G, p. 7)

As mentioned in the theory section, another characteristic of the Family style corporate culture is as the name implies: you are like one big family. In an Affective culture like Brazil it is common to be more emotional in your expressions and it is not expected of you to always control your emotions. Additionally, as Brazil is a Diffuse culture, the lines between work and private life are blurred, and your colleagues quickly become your good friends and part of your in-group- which ought to be quite natural when you spend so much time at work. Entering an Eiffel Tower corporate culture in a neutral and Specific culture will therefore be a big contrast:

“In Brazil you become friends with people from your work environment, it'll be so easy to hang out with them and go for dinners and being invited to their homes. Every place you go to work in Brazil, you're going to make friends, like friends you're going to hang out with. And here it's not like that, which you probably know. It's really nice when you have a Friday bar when you have social events, but you're never really like friends.” (Appendix D, p. 5)

“(Isabela)Your colleagues (in Brazil) become very good friends. You have best friends from work, and from school. Like you guys have. And that means that when I arrived here, I felt that very hard because. People at work in Denmark they come, they're nice to you they go home they don't care. Even though they ask: “did you have a good weekend?” or “Do you have plans?” that's



just a conversation, they don't really care if you don't know anybody or if you don't have friends they don't invite you over. So, it takes time to get to know them. Once you know them it works very well. But it takes time.” (Appendix G, p. 4).

“I think in general in Brazil we are... Here, let's say that Danes are more professional. I think in Brazil we try to make our colleagues friends. So, it means that we hang out with them after work or working hours. While here, I think Danes are more closed let's say that. “(Appendix B, p. 3)

“Like your colleagues, they don't connect too much with you and then you experience some loneliness. The beginning was hard. I still feel that at work, but I think it's possible to compensate that deficiency in other areas, not at work. But I think it's hard, very hard to make friends especially because people here they try to be very efficient at work. So, lunch time for example. People in Brazil are one hour having lunch and talking and so on, while here people they just eat and leave because they want to leave earlier. “(Appendix B, p. 5)

“When I arrived the first time it was not that easy because people are very self-contained in their own space and that was it. But with the time I started to talk with people around and then it ended up with some people getting closer. But I noticed that that happened more with internationals. The Danes are still a little bit more.... For example, all the Danes that I invited to come by for dinner, they always had an excuse to not come because they had something else to do. People are more closed, in their own, very silent and it kind of feel a little bit like, if you want to talk with someone, you are disturbing people. It feels like no one wants to be disturbed (...): I think that in Brazil we allow ourselves more to stop, to talk with someone, to talk about the work, share what you're doing with someone and spend some time just talking with the person and get more to a personal level. Here I think it's more like people go to the work, sit in the office and work for the whole amount of hours that they have to work and then they go home.” (Appendix E, p. 4 - 5)

“Also, when you have to approach someone about something, in the beginning I really tried to pay attention to how people do it here. Because in Brazil you yell from your desk to the other desk and nobody cares, but here I had to observe how people do it.” (Appendix D, p. 10)

“In Brazil I think you would just use that to have a better work environment, because you then get a lighter environment in the sense that it doesn't feel like 100 percent work all the time. I would say that I miss that a bit here and I also think that my colleagues are very efficient and wanting to do as much as possible during their workday. Of course, that should be something we should strive for, but I don't think this should prevent us from, you know, talking a little bit about yourself your life or whatever. I think you probably noticed that Brazilians they really open their life, you know from the moment you meet them. Here in Denmark you don't do that at all (...) I would say that Danes are at work to work. And if you want to mingle then schedule an appointment to do that. But I also missed a little bit of being spontaneous. In Denmark if you want to go out with Danes, you really need to make sure to book time in their calendar, otherwise it's not going to fly. But in Brazil I feel that things could go on a more easygoing manner, more spontaneously. We just do this, and we just invite, and it doesn't necessarily mean that they will actually go to whatever you are inviting them to. But it's maybe just a way of doing courtesy. Like I don't know if you noticed in Brazil we always say: “Oh we need to catch up and do something”. (Appendix F, p. 3)

“(Isabela) But on the other hand, I think it's better the way it is in Denmark because then you focus at work and things become more professional and you don't mix things. I think it's more efficient, I think people use the time better. They don't stay chatting as much as in Brazil. And also, for example here, you don't become friends with your manager or with someone that is below you. So, if you have to make a tough decision it's easier. In Brazil you always have the emotional part because maybe you are firing your friend. So, I think it is more professional (...) In Brazil you cross boundaries a lot and not so with you. You don't respect the personal space. You don't respect the limits. If a person is talking to another person, there are always interruptions, there is always someone that is listening and then they comment or give opinions. That's

Brazilian. And I think in Denmark you guys are very good at respecting that. And I think that that's one thing that when we came, I felt I felt very good about that at work. Because I think if you if you don't want to expose your personal life at work it's OK. And no one will judge you for that. And I like that a lot.” (Appendix G, p. 4)

“(Igor) For example if you say: “I need to stay home”, right, In Brazil you would have to draw the whole story behind of the reason that you have to stay home here you say: “I have to stay home”, Ok, that's your business.” (Appendix G, p. 3)

Here it is clear to see that all these respondents feel a big change from the Brazilian Family style culture where you are generally more emotional in your expressions and your colleagues, as your in-group members, are like your family as the line between personal life and work life is blurred, if existing at all.

The overall impression in these responses was, as expected, that it is difficult to connect with your not so vividly and emotionally expressive Danish colleagues and get a relationship that is not purely professional, even to an extent where Danes come up with excuses for not socializing after work and socializing at work is practically limited to preplanned socializing events.

The reactions to this cultural change of entering an Eiffel Tower corporate culture were mixed, in the sense that some interviewees felt that it could be quite lonely from time to time and because you all of a sudden find yourself in a Specific and Neutral culture you almost feel like you're disturbing your colleagues if you want to talk; a little chit chat once in a while would only make the work environment more relaxed. On the other hand the responses were also positive in the sense that the work environment is more professional; you are at work to work and you don't need to share your personal life if you don't want to. Common for all the above mentioned respondents is that, while they may still not have gotten used to it, or still miss aspects from colleague relations in Brazil, they all seemed to have cracked the cultural code of what to expect from their Danish colleagues, which is already a big step towards becoming more culturally intelligent.

While what can be defined as the difference between Specific and Diffuse cultures is how blurred you prefer your line to be between your private life and your work life, it however also has to do with the importance of relationships to the people you do business with, as these relationships defines whether

you can trust the person. People from Diffuse cultures often values personality as high as skills, because if you cannot trust or work with the person, the skills are less relevant. For most of the respondents it appeared that the lack of socializing at work did not affect whether or not they felt they could work together with certain people; it was at least not something they had ever thought about. Marcelo (Appendix E) however, had given this some thought:

“I think both efficiency and maintaining a good relationship matter. If I have a co-worker that is a genius in a specific area, it's nice to work with him, but I can't communicate with that person if they can't have a close relationship, it's also not nice. The environment where you are working is also important and how much you can count on those persons. You spent a lot of time in an office, and there's a lot of people there with whom you share maybe one third of your day with. It's nice to be a little bit more than co-workers in some specific task and it is nice that you are able have a closer relationship with that person and that makes it easier to work together as well. To get to actually know the person but if you can't get to know the person it is a little bit difficult to work with that person. And I tend to think that here in Denmark your skills matter more than anything else.

**Do you feel that clashing sometimes?**

I don't feel it clashing.... Yeah it does clash. The people that has caused me more problems to work with in my company are Danes and people who are difficult to access, more closed. The closed people who maximum talk about things that are work related and one or two jokes about what happened in the media. Maybe about a big news that happened the day before, over lunch. And that's it. And it's a bit difficult to actually get to work close with those people.” (Appendix E, p. 4)

Here we see a clear difference in the way people from Affective and Diffuse cultures works compared to Neutral and Specific cultures; for Marcelo it is difficult to have a close corporation with people who are very closed. While we can't know which working style the people he works with prefers, it is safe to assume that it is the working style of a Neutral and Specific culture as their attitude at work is more “stick to the relevant stuff” and there seem to be no apparent need to socialize before getting into business.

All the interviewees above expressed how their colleagues at work are more closed and private which were both good and bad. A few interviewees however did not find this to be the case when they started working in Denmark:

“I see an effort from the Danish colleagues I work with to have this breaking the ice talk in the beginning. And I think that's because I work in a very international office. And then I think people are more aware that maybe this is important for other cultures.” (Appendix H, p. 3)

“Yes. I think my relationship was better with my colleagues in Denmark than here (in Brazil). I don't know if it was because they are my age or a little bit older, and most of my colleagues here are younger than me. I felt more comfortable with them and I could feel more friends than here. Maybe also because I was in another environment with internationals, so you feel more excited. (...) Even with the Danes, everybody complained: "oh Danes they are so closed they don't let in people" but for me it was just okay. I see foreigners complain about "oh I couldn't find Danish friends". But I don't know. But I was also working with a lot of internationals, so maybe the environment was different.” (Appendix A, p. 2-3)

“And when it happens it's more like foreigners. All my friends I have here I made them during the PhD. And actually, we were all internationals so we kind of like bonded because we all feel kind of alone, so it's different.” (Appendix D, p. 5)

“It's funny that you are saying that because I don't see it this way. But yeah maybe because I am a foreigner, so I tend to connect easily with my colleagues because they are an important part of my life. I mean because they were the first contacts I've made here right. But I don't consider myself very open and that I don't have like a division between my private and work life. I do have a certain division. But less than I had in Brazil so to speak. But I think that's because I am a foreigner. And here I counted a lot on my colleagues in the beginning when I had no clue what to do. (Appendix H, p.3)

The similarities in all these quotes seems to be that when working in an international office it is easier to connect with your colleagues. Igor (Appendix G) gave a great explanation on the difference between working as an international in a Brazilian organization and as an international in a Danish organization:

“(Igor) Also, one thing that I think is rather very different is because when you are in Brazil, you're working with Brazilians it's super rare that you're going to be working with foreigners, very very rare. And here you are working depending on where, if you don't speak Danish you probably want to work in an international area with people from all over the world. So, at my job my team is super different. Like we have Iraqi, Bosnian, Portuguese, Brazilian, English. So, we have everything there it is very very different. So, when you are dealing with people with different cultures as well, the dynamic is different from Brazil where you already know when you say something, how people will perceive it or how they will behave. (Appendix G, p. 5)

Igor's description is a great description of gaining Cultural Intelligence. When you are working in Brazil as a Brazilian, you know what to expect of your colleagues as you are all from Diffuse cultures, but when enter a new organization with people from various cultures, you need to sharpen your senses and pay attention to the cultural differences in order to gain Cultural Intelligence and by that gain an improved communication with your colleagues. Leticia (Appendix H) described the same phenomena:

“Whenever I start working with someone new, I need to pay attention because it's not automatic or you know. I'm comfortable now because I know my boss, I know the people that work for me and so on them I know how to read. But when I have someone new, I'm like: “OK. This person comes with a completely different background. I come from a completely different background. We need to find some common communication.” (Appendix H, p. 3)

The answers to the questions: “*How do you experience the clear distinction between work life and private life in Denmark and that your colleagues are not necessarily your friends?*” and “*How do you experience the notion that Danes prefer getting straight to business rather than starting with polite conversation to maintain a good relationship with the people they do business/work with?*” confirmed

that moving from a Diffuse Family style corporate culture to specific Eiffel Tower corporate culture ought to create some challenges. You are moving from a place where the working culture is that you and your colleagues are as close as it comes to being a family with plenty of room for chit chat and socializing at any time of the day, to a place where your colleagues seem to only want to talk about work related things to optimize their workday and therefore be able to go home earlier. On the other hand you are also moving from a culture where because of the optimized work, you may not have any social connection with your colleagues, but you end up with a lot more time on your hand as it is not necessary nor is it expected to stay longer at work to show your colleagues and boss how hardworking you are; there is no one to show it to because everyone went home already.

With a much lower score on the Power Distance scale your boss in the Eiffel Tower corporate culture will likewise also be different; more approachable and less authoritarian as the custom is to give employees the independence to solve tasks as they see fit, rather than giving out orders and expect to be consulted on every decision. This will give you more independence in your work which was very appreciated among the interviewees, yet it was also something that took some getting used to; how to prioritize? At what point should I ask for confirmation? And is it really okay to question my boss' decision?

Brazil's high score on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension results in an emotional need to be busy and an inner urge to work hard as there is always someone else available to take your job. This social pressure to work hard to impress your boss and colleagues has therefore become a norm, even to a point where stress is seen as a weakness and an excuse to not be able to do your job. The shorter working hours and lack of authoritarian managers in Denmark was therefore one of the main things that the interviewees needed to get used to.

The strong separation of work and private life in the Specific Danish Eiffel Tower corporate cultures with a neutral need for emotional expression is also something many of the interviewee's struggled with. It caused some loneliness, a wish for a more relaxed work environment where you don't feel like you're disturbing your colleagues, and troubles with gaining trust and having a good teamwork with a colleague you don't even know because he/she is very closed. It also caused some to be happily surprised with the fact that it is not expected of you to share your private life if you don't want to and you can therefore keep emotions out of your professional life. Common to most of the respondents are that they felt that internationals or Danes in international work environments were a lot easier to connect

with and socialize with, which is likely to be the result of Cultural Intelligence. Employees in international environments have been faced with different cultures and different behaviors and communication styles. And perhaps they have started to pay attention to these details to create a more efficient collaboration and communication among colleagues, exactly like Leticia (Appendix H) put it: “OK. This person comes with a completely different background. I come from a completely different background. We need to find some common communication.” (Appendix H, p. 3).

## **In-groups and Trust**

As stated in the theory section, in-groups and out-groups are usually found in societies that are passing from traditional to modern conditions; the more traditional a society is the more the organizational behavior tends to be influenced by personal relations which are prioritized above the formal and impersonal requirements of the organization itself. Organizations in these societies are often affected by nepotism towards people in your in-group as the personal connections marginalizes the importance of bureaucracy and official guidelines.

The idea of trust within one's in-group and a general distrust to one's out-group have already been touched a bit upon earlier, e.g. when Leticia talked about how her Brazilian supervisor needed to get to know her before they could work together (Appendix C, p. 4) or when Marcelo talked about how he can find it difficult to work closely together with people whom he doesn't know at all because they are closed and difficult to read (Appendix E, p. 4).

As specified in the theory section, Brazil is a society transitioning from a traditional to a modern society and there will therefore be several organizational equalities to be found with the Danish modern society, but the importance of personal relations in organizations have a greater importance in Brazilian organizations. Since Denmark is a modern country, the notion of out-groups should therefore not exist, and the phrasing of the question: “*How do you experience the idea in Denmark that people you don't know can generally be trusted unless they prove otherwise?*” was then based on the hypothesis. The aim was to get the interviewees' thoughts on whether they agreed with this or felt any difference in this area.

The general responses to this question were that the interviewees didn't feel that it was possible for them to generalize the concept of trust as much as the question suggested: “I think that's more personal, so it doesn't mean that whatever I'm going to say is actually what will happen.” (Appendix D,



p. 2). Other interviewees did not know what to answer to the question, hence the question is left out of a few transcripts. However, after being asked in different ways, or in connection with different questions it became evident that several respondents had opinions correlating with the theory of Brazilians having a general distrust to people from their out-group:

“(Igor) In Brazil you are raised to not trust anybody. “(Appendix G, p. 3)

“(Isabela) In Denmark, I trust people here, but when I go back to Brazil I switch.” (Appendix G, p. 3)

“What I have learned is that the Danish culture is based on trust so as a theory everybody is trustable. But here in Brazil, we don't trust people until we know them. “(Appendix A, p. 3)

“Danes trust in each other. Unfortunately, we don't do the same in Brazil. I think because Brazil is such a multiple country, with all kinds of people and culture on its base, that the moral line is looks more like a curve for the society. Different of Denmark, which is a small country with very consistent culture, in Brazil we can never predict what that other person that you don't know will think about what is right or wrong. “(Appendix E, p. 7)

“(Isabela) that was one thing that we learned the first day we were in Denmark. The lady that was helping us, she told us that in Denmark you trust everybody unless they prove the contrary. In Brazil it's the opposite. “(Appendix G, p. 3)

“(Igor) It is like this if I'm meeting someone like let's say I met that person through work and I'm making the first move, I tend to trust more but if I'm big being approached the mind of a Brazilian is like “OK this person's trying to get something out of me”. So, I don't trust at all.” (Appendix G, p. 3)

Here we see the clear notion of out-groups in Brazil, and Igor's comment about him not trusting people if they are the first ones to approach him is a great example of the negative reciprocity, as

described in the theory section, where it is 'something for nothing'. Clearly Igor is aware of this fact that if someone from an out-group approaches him asking for something, he can only expect nothing in return. To move from the negative reciprocity to balanced or even generalized reciprocity you have to prove yourself as someone trustable like Isabela describes: "I don't trust you unless you prove I can trust you. You always start not trusting." (Appendix G, p. 3)

In these quotes it's clear to see that the notion of in-groups and out-groups is still present in the Brazilian society, and that Denmark as a modern society goes by the notion that "You trust everybody unless they prove the contrary." (Appendix G, p. 3). The fact that people generally trust each other in Denmark was explained quite well by Marcelo: "Denmark, which is a small country with very consistent culture" (Appendix E, p. 7). Marcelo's thought about the trust in Denmark is therefore that people generally trust each other because the culture in the society is fairly homogeneous and you therefore know what to expect, which is not the case in the Brazilian society with huge differences in both cultural groups and social differences. Marcelo continues in this same line of thought as he describes how he has felt like he needed to prove himself capable in work situations with Danes: "I think that it is more often that it happens among the Danes. I had to prove myself capable without the reason for that a couple of times before I got people to trust me." (Appendix E, p. 7). This quote could suggest that in Denmark Marcelo is viewed as someone from an out-group and must prove himself in order to move closer to the in-group and thereby make people trust him more. It is therefore indicated that, while Denmark is a modern society and less influenced by the personal relations, the notion of out-groups still exists; foreigners are in this out-group.

The fact that organizational members in modern societies like Denmark focus more on rules rather than being influenced by personal relations, is also connected to Denmark being a Universalism culture that, as stated in the theories, places a high importance on laws, rules and obligations. As seen in the theory section, in Universalism cultures rules come before personal relations while people in Particularism cultures like Brazil believe that circumstances and relationships dictate the rules, and situations are handled based on what is happening and who is involved. The Universalism and Particularism dimension will be more in focus further down in the analysis.

The answers to the question "*How do you experience the idea in Denmark that people you don't know can generally be trusted unless they prove otherwise?*" confirmed the theory of in-groups and out-groups in Brazil, and that there is a general notion in Brazil that you can't and shouldn't trust someone

you don't know, which was described very by Igor "If I'm big being approached (by a stranger) the mind of a Brazilian is like "OK this person's trying to get something out of me" (Appendix G, p. 3). People you don't know are in your out-group and therefore in the negative reciprocity segments where it is 'something for nothing' because a stranger from the out-group have no moral commitment to you, and you can therefore not expect to ever get a favor in return.

As stated in the theory section the in-groups and out-groups are found in societies transitioning from a traditional to a modern society; the more traditional a society is the more the organizational behavior tends to be influenced by personal relations like that of a Family style corporate culture. Since the organizational style in Denmark is influenced by Denmark being a modern society, the same notion of in-groups and out-groups not trusting strangers is not evident to the same extend as in Brazil, which was confirmed in the many interview responses where the general line of thought was that "In Denmark you trust everybody unless they prove the contrary. "(Appendix G, p. 3)

However, Denmark is not completely free of having out-groups. Marcelo (Appendix E) described how he felt that he, as a foreigner, in some occasions at work had to prove himself to his Danish colleagues: "I had to prove myself capable without the reason for that a couple of times before I got people to trust me. "(Appendix E, p. 7). Isabela (Appendix G) and Fernanda (Appendix A) described a similar concept, that they have felt that employers sometimes did not feel comfortable giving them a chance or perhaps didn't trust their skills, because they are not Europeans:

" We saw it with Igor when he was trying, not everybody wants to try someone and take the risk of hiring someone that comes from a different country a different background, different study doesn't speak the language and just arrived in Denmark. So, what are the chances that the person will leave." (Appendix G, p. 10)

"I went in November for a job interview and they gave the position to another girl who has like third of my experience, but she lives there and she has been living in Denmark for five years and I have many more years of experience than her, my CV is much bigger than hers and I didn't get the position because I know it's because she's there. She is not Danish, but she is European. I heard people complain about it: "I am a foreigner, I speak Danish, I am highly qualified, but they

don't give me a chance". I think the work environment could be more open to people from outside, because the population is too small, so they need people." (Appendix A, p. 7)

While Denmark as a modern society is less influenced by the notion of in-groups and out-groups, these quotes suggests that foreigners/non-Europeans are yet to be part of this, as they are still sometimes put in the out-group by both recruiters and coworkers.

## Rules and Guidelines

As it has been stated in the theories, and in the previous section people from Particularism cultures place more value on relationships and circumstantial influences while people from Universalism cultures focus more on the rules defining a given situation. The importance of relationships in a Brazilian Family style culture have already been covered in the previous questions, as well as the notion that the Danish Eiffel Tower corporate culture places less importance on the personal relations within the organization. The question "*to what extent do you experience that rules, guidelines and obligations are more strictly followed in Denmark compared to Brazil?*" therefore, aimed to focus more on the importance of rules and obligations in the Danish Universalism culture, as the little importance on maintaining good relationships in Eiffel Tower organizations have already been covered (and confirmed) earlier.

The answers to this question were only three as some interviewees did not know what to answer or didn't have any opinion to the question and are therefore left out of the transcripts. The three responses to the question were varied; one contradicted with the theory, one confirmed the theory and one interviewee did not feel that there was a big difference.

Ana's answer contradicted with the theory of Denmark being a Universalism culture, regarding rules and obligations: "Here I think we are more open to discuss. OK, there's a rule but can we talk to see if it makes sense in this case and so on. Whereas the work environment that I have been in in Brazil it's very much about the law: "That's the rule, so we need to follow the guidelines"" (Appendix H, p. 5). This response indicates that Ana actually believes the situation to be the other way around where Brazil is the Universalism culture following the rules more strictly than Denmark and that people in Denmark let the circumstances define whether or not the rule makes sense to follow.

Fernanda on the other hand agreed with the theory of Denmark being a “rule-following” culture: “People are not questioning many things. We were joking with some international friends, if you want to make the Danes do what you want you just say, "that's a rule"” (Appendix A, p. 6). Fernanda’s quote confirms Denmark as a Universalism culture where you should follow the rules without asking questions or letting the circumstances or people involved, dictate if rules should be followed or not.

Lastly, Marcelo didn’t at first think that the strictness of the rules, and the number of rules differs that much from Brazil to Denmark, but it quickly became clear that people’s relationships to following the rules in Denmark is quite different for him:

“I don’t think it differs that much. We don’t have a lot of rule sin Brazil. But maybe we don’t really respect rules that we don’t consider to be important. For example, if there is a rule saying that you cannot install a certain application on your computer, and we know this application doesn’t harm anything, we would install it anyway (...) Here I think people expect that everything is working as it is supposed to. . (...) In Brazil people just find a way around, find a way around the process. We don’t stop our work because of that. (Appendix E, p. 6 - 8)

Here we can see a clear indication of Brazil being a Particularism culture where the rules exists and are there for a reason, but if a certain rule doesn’t make sense in a specific situation, people don’t feel the need to follow it. Answering another question earlier in the interview, Marcelo also gave a description of a situation he encountered at work in Denmark, which confirms the strict rule-following trend in a Universalism culture:

“If you need a simple thing from one department, like if you need a special permission for something from an IT department where they have to take 10 seconds to open something and check a box. They won’t do that unless you go there, open a ticket and go through the very strict process that was made by someone for that to be done. But it is something that, yes, it is strict, but it is time consuming to do that and sometimes it is a process that doesn’t make sense. And sometimes it’s a fast change that could be done easily (Appendix E, p. 4)

Here is clear that Marcelo, a person from a Particularism culture, judged that because of the circumstances it would be okay to not follow the given rules to get the permission, as this would save a lot of time, but finding himself in a Universalism culture he needs to go through the bureaucratic (and perhaps pointless) process to get the permission.

The interview answers regarding rules and guidelines in Denmark were few and varied, so it was not possible to get a very clear picture of the extent to which Denmark is a Universalism culture and Brazil a particularism culture. One interviewee felt that people follows rules more strictly in Brazil, suggesting Denmark to be a Particularism culture and Brazil a Universalism culture. Two interviewees felt that the Danes are not questioning the rules at all, sometimes to a point where it is a waste of time and energy to follow the rules to the point, rather than judging the need in a specific situation. The variation in answers can be caused by numerous things; the place they work, the people they work with, or where in Brazil the respondents are from as it is a country the size of Europe with many regional cultural differences.

## **Communication**

The answers to the question *“how do you experience the way that Danes use less details in their communication style?”* differs from the previous questions as it is based on how the interviewees has their preferred way of communicating while the previous theories can be seen and experienced in the way the interviewees responds to colleagues, rules, orders, authority, and other circumstances found within the organization.

The question is based in Hall's theory about High- and Low-Context culture, and as it was stated in the theory section, Brazilians belong to the category of High-Context cultures where written and spoken words can have several meaning depending on the context in which it is communicated, so to avoid misunderstandings, at least in writing, it is often necessary to describe issues in great detail. Danes are according to Hall in the opposite context, the Low-Context culture, where people are explicit and direct in their way of communicating, and it is the speakers responsibility to communicate a clear message and it is not expected that people will try to read between the lines. These two communication styles are therefor quite different from each other, which is probably why so many interviewees had an opinion about the Danes' way of communicating:

“At the beginning this communication part was very interesting, right. Often when I got an email or something, I didn't know how I interpret that. So, I had a couple of examples of it. And then I was like: “OK. I don't know if this is positive or negative or telling me to go on or hold on.” And then I contacted my colleagues, the closest ones and said: “Can you help me? What do you understand from this email?” And then she gave me her interpretation and then I started to understand the mindset.” (Appendix H, p. 3)

“I'm sorry to say that, but the communication there (in Denmark) sucks. That was my biggest problem with the Danes. At work sometimes they reply the email really quickly and the email I sent one year ago no one cared to reply. And for example now I am trying to go back to Denmark to work at the university, so they have the open calls with opportunities for us to do the research and everything, but every month they have the open calls they change the rules. And then they write something in a website and I don't understand, so I have to ask them, I have sent so many emails asking "what did you mean by that", so I think that people there they don't really know how to explain things and make it clear. And I observed that Danes in work environment have problems to manage people. The things related to Human Resources are very, very confusing, I can't understand, and I observed kind of this behavior too with friends, with problems with communication.” (Appendix A, p. 3)

Here we see that both Leticia (Appendix H) and Fernanda (Appendix A) had troubles interpreting the Danish communication, probably because they have been used to the fact that, in a High-Context culture like Brazil, if a message doesn't contain a lot of details there are several different ways to interpret that message. While in a Low-Context culture like Denmark the speaker does not expect the receiver to try to read between the lines, which is why it is often not necessary to complement the message with a load of details. When asked about her opinion on why the communication in Denmark was inefficient, Fernanda described this exact concept of the necessity of using many details in communication in Brazil:

“I think it is something related to the culture. People don't feel that it is urgent, it is not necessary to reply and give details and these things and here in Brazil we give details for everything. If we

are going to send one email, we give a huge reply to people and I have sometimes sent emails to my boss there in Denmark which were gigantic, and his reply was just a thumbs up. This is something very different from Brazilians. We pay much attention to the detail and we explain, and we explain everything, and Danes are just like "yes" or "no". Or sometimes no reply. Sometimes Danes can be quite ambiguous, sometimes with friends also I have to ask "what did you mean by that? I can't really understand". It's the culture, it's something I got used to." (Appendix A, p. 4)

Marcelo also described his surprise with the lack of details in the communication at his workplace:

“We use more details, when we communicate in Brazil, in general. We try to bring a context about where I have my problem or where this problem started to appear. What, and what we have done so far. And I think the Danes go directly to the point and they don't expect you to demand the context. They expect to get questions about some specific points only, they don't care about the why. (Appendix E, p. 5)

Similarly, Andressa have given the lack of details in Danish communication some thought, and she gave an interesting comment about how the language itself can have an influence on the communication:

“I think especially for me that I'm a Portuguese speaker, I think we use a lot of words to describe the same thing. And now that I'm learning Danish, I can see the difference, which explains why you use very few words. (...) I think in Brazil for example, if we have to send an email and ask several questions, I feel like Danish people they will answer not all of the questions, but only a few of them. While in Brazil we try to summarize everything and then you answer everything. But in Denmark you have to ask again; “yes, but what about this other thing?” (Appendix B, p. 4)



Like Fernanda (Appendix A), Leticia (Appendix G), and Andressa (Appendix B), Leticia described how she sometimes finds the Danish communication a bit vague, and that she often needs clarification:

“I think sometimes I don't understand them because, for example one of the advisers is very vague. He says some things that are.... And then I have to ask him to be more clear. And the other, talks about some theories that I don't understand. So, I have to also kind of ask him about it. But I don't think this is an issue. I never felt offended by them being direct for example.” (Appendix C, p. 6)

Isabela had some thoughts on the vagueness of Danish communication, and how it might sometimes be better to be clearer in your communication:

“(Isabela) I think sometimes the Danes they don't want to... they don't want to create a conflict. So, they did give mild communication when they need to be more assertive. They want to stay on the safe side. Sometimes I miss that people just tell the truth. Just tell the truth and let it hurt. Rip off the Band-Aid and let it hurt and then you will survive. Sometimes I think it doesn't come clear. So, for example sometimes, I find it difficult to understand what the real message is, because they tried to make it a little more pleasant.” (Appendix G, p. 11)

Danes are vague in their communication, the communication is very easy to misunderstand, and the reply to a long email is just a thumbs-up or “yes” or “no”. These are some of the many things the interviewees have struggled with when starting to work in Denmark. In a High-Context culture like Brazil a lot of details when writing a message, is a necessity for the receivers to not read between the lines, interpreting it their own way or generally just misunderstand the communicated information. It therefore ought to be a big cultural clash when you enter a culture where the person communicating is expecting that people will not read between the lines or interpret the message your own way; what is being said is exactly how it should be understood. There is therefore no need for detailed explanations, which consequently will result in a person from a High-Context culture being confused with the interpretation of the message.

The interviewees all agreed that the Danish communication can be confusing for them and that they wished for a more detailed communication from time to time. Some interviewees had some thoughts as to why the Danish communication appears to be quite ambiguous; the Danish language contains less words than the Portuguese language, hence there are less descriptive words to use in the communication. Another explanation was that many Danes try to avoid conflicts and are therefore deliberately vague to make a message more pleasant, whereas it would be nicer if Danes would be more assertive and just “rip off the Band-Aid”

The confusion with Danish communication is big among all the interviewees and while many are still struggling with this, Alfredo gave a great suggestion how to work together with your Danish colleagues: “if you want to work with them you really need to be efficient when talking to them.” (Appendix F, p. 4).

## **Time Management**

The answers to the question: “*how do you experience the typical workstyle of only doing one thing at a time and not doing several tasks at once?*” is based on Hall’s second theory of Monochronic and Polychronic cultures where people from Polychronic cultures like Brazil often work with several tasks overlapping, as opposed to Monochronic cultures like Denmark where people prefer to do one thing at a time. As these two time management styles are complete opposites of each other, entering a country with the other time management culture ought to be difficult to get used to. And just like the previous question, which was also based on Hall’s theory, a lot of the interviewees had given this some thought:

“I have a problem like when I have a lot of stuff to do, I want to start everything, and you know because I get anxious and I want to finish and you can't do that. So, also in terms of priorities this was difficult for me in the beginning.” (Appendix D, p. 4)

“I think here in Denmark we do one thing at a time. We talk a lot about priorities, I never spoke that much about priorities in my whole life. So, like what is a priority what we can deliver, and we plan a lot. In Brazil for instance, there are so many things happening. All the time. That is pretty much like: “OK. Put one more, one more to my basket. Let's do that. I'm gonna do that.”

And then you start doing a lot at the same time. (...) I think is that I am very used to work in this agitated environment. And I still have to think sometimes and say: "OK I'm not in this agitated mod, it's fine I can prioritize and then I need to structure my work and finish things and then go to that." So, this implies that I have to say no sometimes which is a little bit challenging for me because there's a part of my brain that says: "No! We have an opportunity here we have to chase it, let's go!" "(Appendix H, p. 4)

These two quotes illustrate a typical trait of time in Polychronic cultures; a lot is happening simultaneously.

As stated in the theory section in Polychronic cultures time is viewed as more flexible and planning and schedules are not of the uttermost importance, because you can never predict what will happen in life. In Monochronic cultures on the other hand, time is linear, and events and tasks are planned and performed one at a time. People from Monochronic cultures usually prefer getting things done on time, so that time is being used efficiently rather than being wasted. Time being more flexible in Brazil compared to Denmark can also be seen in the hours spend at work, where in Brazil, as a Diffuse culture, you work long hours and it is normal, and accepted to talk non-work related stuff during the working hours and not strictly follow the work schedule, as you will just make up for the lost work at a later point. Denmark on the other hand, as a Specific culture you work when you are at work and use the time efficiently, which will consequently allow you to go home as early as possible. This focus on time efficiency is also something many interviewees have noticed:

"When people are working in Denmark, you guys work fewer hours, but you are much more productive. Here in Brazil we have so many hours, but we don't produce that much. I think because we're getting tired, and you have shorter hours, so you don't have much time to do that thing. So, time management there it is a little bit better. (...) You have less time to do that, you have to go home and two or you have to go home at four. And in Brazil it's more like "oh we can stay until six or seven..." (Appendix A, p. 6)

"I think in general Danes are very efficient in terms of work, they are very focused and very engaged in performing their work in general. (...) I think that in Brazil we allow ourselves more

to stop, to talk with someone, to talk about the work, share what you're doing with someone and spend some time just talking with the person and get more to a personal level. Here I think it's more like people go to the work, sit in the office and work for the whole amount of hours that they have to work and then they go home.” (Appendix E, p. 6)

“I think that's why Danes are so effective, that's why at 3 o'clock they just turn off the computer and leave and don't think about work anymore. Because they are really structured in a better way. I'm also structured, but I learned that because I'm a scientist. But I still do a lot of stuff at the same time, and I talk a lot so sometimes I feel like: “OK, I spent half an hour at the coffee machine, so now I have to work an hour more” (Appendix D, p. 10).

Being structured was also something the interviewees had paid attention to; there is time set off for working, a time for answering emails and even a specific time set off for chit chatting and socializing:

“I would maybe tell a Brazilian to expect things to be very structured and efficient. So, forget about chit chatting and during work and getting your life exposed to your colleagues from day one. And yeah, focus on work when it's work time and when it's the defined time for mingling then you can do your Brazilian thing there.” (Appendix F, p. 4)

“I think Danes are very structured in a very where they do this and this, they don't even answer emails because their time to answer emails is from two to three or something.” (Appendix D, p. 10)

By looking at these excerpts from the interviews, it is quite clear to see that while most of the Brazilian interviewees were, and probably still are, used to working in a more agitated environment of a Polychronic culture, they definitely entered a Monochronic culture where structure, priorities and time efficiency are key words. Leticia shared her thoughts as to why people in Brazil are used to doing several things at the same time:

“I think it's a characteristic of the economy as well. Because for example I worked 15 years in Brazil and during all those years and what was happening is that the economy was booming. So, you always had an opportunity to chase so it wouldn't make sense in an economy like that to say: “Hold on, because I have to finish this one and then I'm going to look at that one.” You pretty much say: Okay wow there’s a chance here to grow let's go let's seek these opportunities”. (Appendix H, p. 4)

This idea that the economy has influence on how people work and prioritize tasks, is an interesting idea and fits quite well with many Latin American countries that are all Polychronic cultures, while Northern Europe for example have more stable economies and are all Monochronic cultures.

There was a clear agreement among the interviewees that the Danish time management is very different from what they are used to from Brazil; Danes talk about priorities all the time and you work when you are at work - socializing with your colleagues can be done in the defined mingling time. It was evident to see that Brazil is a Polychronic culture in the way which the interviewees described how they are used to working in a more agitated environment and doing several things at once and talking non-work related stuff during the working hours is common as well as desired as it creates a more relaxed work environment.

Denmark on the other hand, as a Monochronic culture when you are at work you work and prioritizing and using your time efficiently will allow you to go home earlier, which many interviewees had noticed: Danes want to go home around 15.30, so they prioritize their tasks around this. A typical trait in a Monochronic culture is structure, and being structured was also something the interviewees had paid attention to; there is time set off for working, a time for answering emails and even a specific time set off for chit chatting and socializing, all to manage the work time as efficiently as possible, which is all represented very well in Leticia’s comment: “If I schedule a meeting, with one supervisor it lasts an hour and that's it. It's an hour.” (Appendix C, p. 6).

## **Changing Jobs and Uncertainty Avoidance**

The answers to the question: “*how do you experience the tendency to change jobs fairly often in Denmark?*” were few as many of the interviewees didn’t know how to answer the question because they

either haven’t noticed this tendency or because as PhD students, some didn’t feel they had the grounds to answer the question. Some interviewees however had given the Danish way of frequently changing your occupation some thought:

“(Isabela) I think sometimes in Denmark people don't really care that they may lose their job because they have the safety that they will get another job. They don't know how it is to work in a place where you have to fight every day, to keep your job. So, they don't value it as much. (...) You guys change jobs a lot. In Brazil, we could stay in the same job for 20 years. (...) And that's something that I'm facing now because in August I'm gonna turn five years that I am in the same position and for the past two years people keep asking me: “Aren't you going to look for something else?”. And then I left for maternity leave and they keep asking me: “Are you going to try to get a different job when you come back.?” No, I'm fine where I am what I'm doing. I don't have plans to leave. But that’s how you guys look at it. (Appendix G, p. 11-12)

“(Igor) We hear stories where people say: “Yeah, I just jumped from that job to that job that job”, with no care in the world. (...) At my company I’ve seen people change positions five times. Me, what I'm doing it's the same position since I started working here, and I like what I do, I do want to change what I do.” (Appendix G, p. 12)

As it was asserted Brazil scores 76 on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension which is more than 50 scores higher than the Danish score of 23. Brazil’s high score on this cultural dimension indicates a strong need for stability, especially when it comes to keeping your job which often results in an emotional need to work hard, and long hours as it has been specified earlier in the analysis. As Igor and Isabela pointed out in their quotes it is therefore quite a different mindset they meet when working in Denmark where frequent job changes is a normality and Danes do not have the same need for structure and predictability in their work life. This mindset can be the result of many things, among which is the extensive social security benefits in Denmark and the workers’ rights not being very extensive, which was also pointed out by Marcelo:

“I think it is very interesting that people are not afraid of moving to another job instead. It is of course attached to the flexible set of laws that allows an employer to fire an employee without having a big cost. As a consequence, the employers are willing to hire people more often. In Brazil we have a lot of work rights. It is very expensive to fire an employee and it gets more expensive for every past month the employee is working at the company. Employers therefore tend to seek people based on the long term fit for the person, to avoid having to fire and pay the social obligations. If a person does not fit, it will be probably be fired very early as the first 90 days is free of charge, and a new employee doesn't cost much to fire after the 90 days. That makes companies be more conservative when hire and a less dynamic employee market. With this dynamism lost, employees tend to seek a career at the company that has already chose him or her in the first place, because that minimizes the risk of not getting a new job or of being fired and have to change job often. I believe that people are very attached to stability in Brazil, while in Denmark the work conditions are more decisive on the job change. (Appendix E, p. 6)

Hiring and firing in Brazil is expensive, which results in people staying in their job once they get one, just like firing and hiring in Denmark is easy which results in people changing jobs more often. These concepts are also seen in the Family style culture where you have a moral obligation to work hard and your colleagues are in your close in-group and become like a family to you as you often stay in the same company for several years. While in the Eiffel Tower corporate culture, your job title is just a role you take on and you are easily replaceable by someone with the same skillset as you, just like you can easily replace someone else's position.

The general opinion about the frequency of job changes in Denmark was not possible to get, as many of the interviewees did not have any impression about this matter. The people who did answer however, felt quite a big change from Brazil where it is not uncommon to stay in the same job for 20 years, to Denmark where it is not uncommon to change your job every few years.

It is expensive to hire in Brazil, so once you get hired you want to hold on to your job and with a score of 76 on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension Brazilians have a strong need for stability. This combined with being from a Diffuse culture working in a Family style corporate culture equals working hard and long hours to show that you are hardworking and committing to your workplace, both because your colleagues quickly become like your family, but also to avoid the uncertainty of changing jobs.

Denmark on the other hand, with a score of only 26 on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension is the complete opposite of Brazil where job stability is not an absolute necessity to the same extent as in Brazil, both because of the extensive social security benefits making it possible for you to pay your bills while you search for a new job, but also because hiring is not as expensive in Denmark as in Brazil, so more companies are willing to “take the risk” of hiring someone new.

The few interviewees who gave their opinion on the matter of changing jobs more frequently, confirmed the huge difference between Brazil and Denmark on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension. This is of course a result of several factors, among which the interviewees suggested it to be due to the facts that firing and hiring in Denmark is easy and fairly cheap, which results in people moving from job to job more frequently, while hiring and firing in Brazil are expensive affairs which results in people holding on to their jobs once they get one.

## **Long-term Orientation**

The answers to the question: *“in Danish companies, how do you experience the need/desire to try out new ways/methods vs. sticking to traditional ways?”* were, like in the previous section, not many, as most of the interviewees did not feel like they really had an insight in neither the Danish nor the Brazilian business style of sticking to traditional methods vs. trying new things. One interviewee however had noticed a difference:

“Yeah, I see that more here. I see we are more open to discuss ways of working. I think we do discuss a lot of ways of working very often here. Which is good. For me it is only positive. We are very open to say: “OK, this is not working what can we do to improve?” And we do this quite often, I think. It’s amazing actually. “

**And how about planning, in relation to business. Do you think companies in Denmark plan long-term or only until the next year?**

“Your question is spot on. I think we plan a lot which is also good. I think we use a lot of our time and energy to plan, right. And I only learned that when I moved here. But I think this is very much related to the state of the economy as well and development of the country. I mean when you are in a market that is so a lot alive and a lot of things happening and millions of people and



opportunities to chase everywhere at least spend it when I was there before the recession. I mean OK we can plan but it's like a train, when the train come you jump, and you deliver. But here we plan a lot.” (Appendix H, p. 6)

As stated in the theories section Denmark scores 35 on the Long-term Orientation dimension while Brazil only scores 9 higher. There therefore should not be any big difference, yet Denmark should according to the theories be slightly more focused on short term planning and profit rather than the long-term planning Leticia described.

Denmark's score of 35 and Brazil's score of 44 are however, fairly close to the middle, which is 50, so it is to expect that some companies differs a bit and that things perhaps have changed since these cultural dimension were created. With only one respondent, it is not possible to get a clear picture of Denmark and Brazil's position on the Long-term Orientation dimension, the comments from the respondent however indicated that Denmark have moved up a bit higher on this dimension.

## **Using your Cultural Intelligence**

The culturally intelligent leader knows that “the HOW is just as important as the WHAT, this is where Cultural Intelligence comes to the fore and delivers results.” (Plum, 2007, p. 5). How can Cultural Intelligence be used to get a successful teamwork in a culturally diverse team? And how can this specifically be applied to a successful inclusion of new Brazilian employees in an organization?

Bridging cultural differences applies to all participants and not just the ‘other’ or the ‘new one’. It is not about Brazilians learning how to work the Danish way, nor is it about Danes adapting their workstyle around the Brazilian way; it is about understanding how each other communicates and work best and this is where Cultural Intelligence becomes relevant.

As stated in the theories, the first dimension of Cultural Intelligence is the emotional/ intercultural engagement which includes the motivation to achieve a successful inter-cultural encounter. The very first step here would be, as an employer, to decide to “take a chance” and hire a Brazilian employee on the same basis as European employees, which according to Isabela (Appendix G, p. 10) and Ana (Appendix A, p. 7) isn't always the case. The next step is then that both the employer, the new employee and the coworkers are motivated to achieve a successful teamwork. As defined in the theories the intercultural engagement is affected by our feelings and impressions about someone's behavior and actions are related

to our beliefs and our values and notion of what is the right way to act. To initiate the intercultural engagement, it is therefore important to stay openminded and not let your own values affect your judgement of other people's behavior too much.

The second dimension of Cultural Intelligence is the cognitive/cultural understanding which consists of understanding yourself and your own culture as well as understanding people with a different cultural background. In this dimension you need knowledge about your own culture and knowledge about the characteristics of other people's cultures and the ability to draw on your experience from other cultural encounters. Here the previously mentioned cultural theories and the analysis of the of the interviews comes in play as they can be used to acquire knowledge about the characteristics of the Brazilians' cultural background.

The third cultural dimension is the action/intercultural communication, and as the name indicates this is where the action happens; where the cultural encounter takes place and what happens during this encounter. This dimension is essentially about what we decide to do or say based on judgement of the situation, past experiences, and knowledge about our own and the other person's cultural background. As mentioned previously, Plum describes the content of the cultural encounter as the problem to be solved or the decisions to be made (Plum, 2007, p. 2).

Which are then according to Brazilians the most important aspects to be adjusted to be able to work even better together with their Danish colleagues? The interviewees listed a few things they wish Danes and Danish organizations could pay more attention to:

“The communication was a big problem for me. That is actually my biggest cultural shock.  
“(Appendix A, p. 7)

“I have experienced some Danes that they work very independently in their tasks which is a good thing but it's also a little bit complicated in the communication sense because if more people are working and that it's nice to know what is being done..” (Appendix E, p. 5)

“(Isabela) To be more committed, I do miss me more committed. Of course, in Brazil we are more committed to work than to family. And in Denmark you guys are more committed to family than to work but I think it could be halfway. You know we could meet halfway, have the right commitment to both.” (Appendix G, p. 11)

“I feel like, we work together in Brazil. A lot of people independent of who your supervisor is or what your project is (...) Here it's just me and my advisors and I don't know what other people are researching “(Appendix C, p. 6)

“The work environment. I think people tend to work better when they know each other and know what to expect from each other, but that also involves culture. And in Brazil people are more willing to innovate. If something happens in Brazil, it’s okay, you’ll find a way around, I won’t stop whatever I’m doing because this specific thing has to be configured in a certain way. If there is a problem, we will overcome that problem in an informal way maybe. Here I think people expect that everything is working as it is supposed to.” (Appendix E, p. 8)

More interactions with your colleagues, more commitment to your work and improved communication seems to be the key issues these Brazilian interviewees wish to improve in Danish workplaces. While adapting to a new culture and work environment is part of moving to a new country for work, these quotes can be very helpful for the employer/coworkers to understand which adaptations have been the most troublesome and perhaps use this information to get a more successful integration of new employees and to be better prepared for future hires.

Cultural Intelligence is not about necessarily changing the way you do things to accommodate the needs of other people. It is just as much about understanding why your cultural background makes you do what you do, and which traits of other people’s cultural background makes them act like they do. The main cultural differences, as determined in the analysis, between Danish and Brazilian work environments and the cultural factors affecting the behaviors and mindsets of the employees, are therefore key aspects in order to achieve a culturally intelligent teamwork between Danes and Brazilians. These main differences are summarized in the conclusion below.

## Conclusion

Cultural differences in multicultural organizations can lead to misunderstandings, miscommunication, and frustrations in a work environment. There is no one-solution for such issues, and the extent to which cultural differences creates conflicts vary a lot, but it is important to acknowledge that managing to work around these cultural challenges and misunderstandings is not a one-way thing: it applies to all participants and not just to 'the other person'.

While the focus on foreign workforce coming to work in Denmark has often been on the EU countries because of the free mobility, it is worth it to expand the search of new employees to outside the EU borders. Brazil is, with its 200 million people and a culture of highly educated people and hard workers, a great market for employment, and the number of Brazilians moving Denmark have also almost doubled over the last ten years; from 2 387 in 2010 to 4 164 in 2020 (Appendix I). Which cultural work challenges could then arise when Brazilians move to Denmark to work? And what are the main characteristics of both cultures' workstyle?

Hiring and firing in Brazil is expensive, which results in people staying in their job once they get one, just like firing and hiring in Denmark is easy which results in people changing jobs more often. These concepts are among many things connected to the different corporate cultures in Brazil and in Denmark. In the Brazilian Family style culture, you have a moral obligation to work hard and your colleagues become like a family to you as you often stay in the same company for several years. In the Danish Eiffel Tower corporate culture, your job title is just a role you take on and you are easily replaceable by someone with the same skillset as you, just like you can easily replace someone else's position.

It is expensive to hire in Brazil, so once you get hired you want to hold on to your job and with a score of 76 on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension Brazilians have a strong need for stability. It is therefore customary as well as expected that you work hard and long hours to show that you are committed to the family that is your workplace. With a Power Distance score of 69 your boss in a Brazilian Family style culture is a respected authority who delegates tasks and gives orders, and those orders should generally not be questioned. Someone's status as a boss is something that has been ascribed to them rather than something they achieved, and merely the status is what should make employees trust the judgement of the boss. This notion was confirmed by many interviewees as it was described how it

is not nice to challenge your boss, or publicly disagree, as the image of the boss in Brazil is very important.

Brazil's high score on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension results in an emotional need to be busy and an inner urge to work hard as there is always someone else available to take your job. This social pressure to work hard to impress your boss and colleagues has therefore become a norm, even to a point where stress is seen as a weakness and as an excuse to not be able to do your job. The shorter working hours and lack of authoritarian managers in Denmark was therefore one of the main things that the interviewees needed to get used to.

The boss in a Danish Eiffel Tower culture is more approachable and less authoritarian as the custom is to give employees the independence to solve tasks as they see fit rather than giving out orders and expect to be consulted on every decision. This will give you more independence in your work which was very appreciated among the interviewees, yet it was also something that took some getting used to; how to prioritize? At what point should I ask for confirmation? And is it really okay to question my boss's decision? The interviewee's surprise with the lack of authority/respect around their Danish bosses confirmed Denmark as an Achievement culture and it moreover confirmed Denmark's low score on the Power Distance dimension as well as the corporate culture being that of an Eiffel Tower. This became clear in the way that all of the participants were surprised with the openness and accessibility of their bosses, the way that their bosses consulted them rather than giving orders and the notion that questioning your boss is generally accepted.

Another aspect where the two corporate cultures differ is that in a Brazilian Family style corporate cultures, your personality and how well you fit in with the rest of the workplace is essential, as Brazilian workplaces typically are like one big (happy) family. As a Diffuse culture the line between your private life and your work life in Brazil is blurred and your colleagues quickly become part of your in-group as your very good friends and someone you could invite to your home for a weekend barbeque or for a beer after work. The importance of your personality and your compatibility with the people you work with in Brazil was confirmed by several interviewees, and Leticia's (Appendix) story of how her Brazilian supervisor wouldn't agree to become her supervisor before they knew each other better was a great example of this concept. Additionally the presence of nepotism in Brazilian organizations was confirmed in the interviews as it was described how you mostly need to know someone in a company to get hired, or how people hired in high positions because of their relations with someone important, are not likely

to ever get fired. Knowing the right people when searching for a job in Brazil is therefore a big advantage, as this someone can vouch for you and ensure that you will be able to fit in at the workplace.

It can then be a bit of a shock to arrive in Denmark and the Danish Eiffel Tower corporate culture where your worth (and desire to hire you) is based on your skills and experience instead of who you know in the company and how well your personality fits with the rest of the team. The compatibility of personalities at work holds no great importance, as Denmark is a Specific culture which means that there is a very clear line between your work and your private life, and this line is not expected to be moved. This means that you work when you are at work and small talk is kept to a minimum to optimize your time to the best extend, so you can go home early.

Exactly this was for many interviewees difficult to get used to. Most interviewees moved from a working culture with plenty of room for chit chat and personal bonding with their colleagues, to a place where the colleagues seem to only want to talk about work related things to optimize their workday and therefore be able to go home earlier. On top of this, Denmark and Danes belong to the cultural dimension of Neutral cultures and for a person from an Affective culture people can easily seem cold, unapproachable, and even rude. All this combined caused some loneliness among the Brazilian interviewees and a wish for a more relaxed work environment where you do not feel like you are disturbing your colleagues by asking them a question. It furthermore resulted in troubles working together with some of the very closed off Danes, as in a Diffuse culture like Brazil, personality and knowing that you can trust the person working with you, is almost as important as the skills that person brings to the table.

The idea that trust is earned in different ways in Brazil than in Denmark can also be seen in the notion of in-groups and out-groups and how you in Brazil generally don't trust people in your out-group, until they prove themselves trustable, which was confirmed in the interviews; "If I'm big being approached (by a stranger) the mind of a Brazilian is like "OK this person's trying to get something out of me (...) In Denmark you trust everybody unless they prove the contrary." (Appendix G, p. 3). The idea of in-groups and out-groups are found in societies transitioning from a traditional to a modern society; the more traditional a society is the more the organizational behavior tends to be influenced by personal relations like that of a Family style corporate culture.

However, Denmark is not completely free of having out-groups. Marcelo (Appendix E) described how he felt that he, as a foreigner, in some occasions at work had to prove himself to his Danish

colleagues: “I had to prove myself capable without the reason for that a couple of times before I got people to trust me. “(Appendix E, p. 7). While Denmark as a modern society is less influenced by the notion of in-groups and out-groups, Marcelo’s quote suggests that foreigners/newcomers are yet to be part of this, as they are still sometimes put in the out-group. The idea of Danes and internationals being put indifferent groups, also became evident by the fact that most of the respondents felt that internationals or Danes in international work environments were a lot easier to connect with and socialize with as they are less closed off an easier to approach.

On top of being neutral in their expressions and reluctant to chit chat Danes are, according to the interviewees, also too vague in their communication. Danish communication is very easy to misunderstand, and the reply to a long email can easily just a thumbs-up or “yes” or “no”. In a High-Context culture like Brazil a lot of details when writing a message, is necessary for the receivers to understand the message as it is common to try to read between the lines or try to interpret the message depending on contextual clues. Entering a Low-Context culture can therefore create a lot of miscommunication as in this culture the person communicating is expecting that people will not read between the lines or try to interpret the message: what is being said is exactly how it should be understood. Thus, there is no need for detailed explanations, which consequently will result in a person from a High-Context culture being confused with the meaning of a message. The interviewees all agreed that the Danish communication is often confusing and ambiguous and many wishes for a more detailed communication from time to time. Some interviewees even had some thoughts as to why the Danish communication appears to be quite ambiguous one which was that many Danes try to avoid conflicts and are therefore deliberately vague to make a message more pleasant, whereas it would be nicer if Danes would be more assertive and just “rip off the Band-Aid”. The confusion with Danish communication is big among all the interviewees and while many are still struggling with this, Alfredo gave a great suggestion on how to work together with your Danish colleagues: “if you want to work with them you really need to be efficient when talking to them.” (Appendix F, p. 4).

Another unambiguous agreement among the interviewees was that the Danish time management is very different from what they are used to from Brazil: Danes talk about priorities all the time and you only work when you are at work - socializing with your colleagues can be done in the defined mingling time. It was evident to see that Brazil is a Polychronic culture in the way which the interviewees described how they are used to working in a more agitated environment and with several things happening at once.

Talking non-work-related stuff during the working hours is common as well as desired among the interviewees as it creates a more relaxed work environment.

Denmark on the other hand, as a Specific and Monochronic culture you work when you are at work and prioritizing and using your time efficiently will allow you to go home earlier, which many interviewees had noticed: Danes want to go home at 15.30, so they prioritize their tasks around this. A typical trait in a Monochronic culture is structure, and being structured was also something the interviewees had paid attention to; there is time set off for working, a time for answering emails and a meeting that’s supposed to be one hour, indeed lasts one hour - all to manage the work time as efficiently as possible.

The interview answers regarding rules and guidelines in Denmark were few and varied, so it was not possible to get a very clear picture of the extent to which Denmark is a Universalism culture and Brazil a Particularism culture. For one interviewee however Denmark is clearly a “rule-following” culture which mostly leads to amusement for the Particularism Brazilian: “People are not questioning many things. We were joking with some international friends, if you want to make the Danes do what you want you just say, “that’s a rule””. (Appendix A, p. 6). For another interviewee, the Universalism culture mostly lead to frustration with time wasted on doing everything according to the plan: “Here I think people expect that everything is working as it is supposed to. (...) In Brazil people just find a way around, find a way around the process. We don’t stop our work because of that. “(Appendix E, p. 6 - 8).

Using Cultural Intelligence to accommodate culture clashes is not about necessarily changing the way you do things to accommodate the needs of other people. It is just as much about understanding why your cultural background makes you do what you do, and which traits of other people’s cultural background makes them act like they do. Here it is important to understand what the Brazilian interviewees found to be the most difficult things to get used to and what they love the most about working in Denmark:

Together with finding the Danish communication vague and frustrating, what most interviewees found the hardest to get used to, was the change in the work environment. You move from a place where the working culture is that you and your colleagues are almost as close as it comes to being a family, with plenty of room for chit chat and socializing at any time of the day, to a place where your colleagues are unapproachable, closed and seem to only want to talk about work related things to optimize their workday so they can go home earlier.



On the other hand, while you may not have any real social connection with your colleagues, you end up with a lot more time on your hands, as it is not necessary nor is it expected to stay longer at work to show your colleagues and boss how hardworking you are: there is no one to show it to because everyone went home already. This extra time to do non-work-related things together with the higher independence at work was something that all interviewees appreciated greatly about working in Denmark.

The culturally intelligent leader knows that “the HOW is just as important as the WHAT, this is where Cultural Intelligence comes to the fore and delivers results.” (Plum, 2007, p. 5). The fact that most of the respondents felt that internationals or Danes in international work environments were a lot easier to connect to and work with is likely to be the result of Cultural Intelligence. Employees in international environments have been faced with different cultures and different behaviors and communication styles and have perhaps started to pay attention to these details to create a more efficient collaboration and communication among colleagues. Exactly like Leticia (Appendix H) put it: “OK. This person comes with a completely different background. I come from a completely different background. We need to find some common communication.” (Appendix H, p. 3). Using Cultural Intelligence just like Leticia demonstrated in her quote is a great strategy to get a more successful integration of new employees and to be better prepared for future hires.

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