

2 Culture and entertainment

- Cross-cultural understanding (2)
- Inviting, and accepting or declining
- Eating out

1 Cross-cultural understanding (2)



- 1 The following text is about cultural diversity. Read it through once and decide which of the three statements (A, B or C) given below the extract offers the most accurate summary.

The impact of culture on business

Take a look at the new breed of international managers, educated according to the most modern management philosophies. They all know that in the SBU, TQM should reign, with products delivered JIT, where CFTs distribute products while subject to MBO. (SBU = strategic business unit, TQM = total quality management, JIT = just-in-time, CFT = customer first team, MBO = management by objectives.)

But just how universal are these management solutions? Are these 'truths' about what effective management really is: truths that can be applied anywhere, under any circumstances?

Even with experienced international companies, many well-intended 'universal' applications of management theory have turned out badly. For example, pay-for-performance has in many instances been a failure on the African continent because there are particular, though unspoken, rules about the sequence and timing of reward and promotions. Similarly, management by objectives schemes have generally failed within subsidiaries of multinationals in southern Europe, because managers have not wanted to conform to the abstract nature of preconceived policy guidelines.

Even the notion of human-resource management is difficult to translate to other cultures, coming as it does from a typically Anglo-Saxon doctrine. It borrows from economics the idea that human beings are 'resources' like physical and monetary resources. It tends to assume almost unlimited capacities for individual development. In countries without these beliefs, this concept is hard to grasp and unpopular once it is understood. International managers have it tough. They must operate on a number of different premises at any one time. These premises arise from their culture of origin, the culture in which they are working, and the culture of the organisation which employs them.

25 In every culture in the world such phenomena as authority, bureaucracy, creativity, good fellowship, verification and accountability are experienced in different ways. That we use the same words to describe them tends to make us unaware that our cultural biases and our accustomed conduct may not be appropriate, or shared.

From *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business* by Fons Trompenaars, Nicholas Brealey Publishing Ltd., London, 1993.

- A There are certain popular universal truths about management which can successfully be applied in various cultural contexts.
- B Cultures are so varied and so different throughout the world that management has to take account of differences rather than simply assume similarities.
- C Effective management of human resources is the key to everyone achieving their full potential.







2 Read the text again. Identify the following:

- a) the problem with 'universal' management solutions
- b) an example of the failure of pay-for-performance
- c) an example of the failure of management by objectives schemes
- d) the problem with human-resource management
- e) three cultures affecting international managers
- f) six areas in which different cultural interpretations apply.

2 Inviting, and accepting or declining



What kinds of social activities in your town could be appropriate ways of entertaining visitors from other countries?

-   1 Listen to the first example on the recording. You will hear a conversation in which someone invites a business associate to a social event. Identify:
- what is being suggested
 - the response
 - what will happen next.
-   2 Listen to the second example, where someone else invites a different business associate to a social event. Identify:
- what is being suggested
 - the response
 - what will happen next.
-   3 Listen to the recording of three short extracts, where hosts invite their visitors to take part in a social activity. The invitations are rejected.
- Identify each suggested activity.
 - Give the reasons for each rejection.
 - Do you think each rejection is appropriate? Explain your answer.

Activity	Reason for rejection	Comments
1		
2		
3		

- 4 Work in pairs. Use the advertisements below to invite your partner to something. He/she should respond. Then change roles so you both get to invite and accept or reject in each situation.

RIGHT OUT CINEMA
Abbey Street

La Dolce Vita
Federico Fellini's masterpiece
with Marcello Mastroianni,
Anita Ekberg and Anouk Aimee
Wednesday and Thursday 8.30p.m.
Admission on the door

Victoria Theatre

No Joke
present
Hello Snappy

Contemporary comedy from the international comedy troupe with 7 performers from 5 different countries. Music, dance, acrobatics, theatre, and plenty of laughter.
'Unmissable - a once in a lifetime experience' *Time In*
10-17 March 8.00p.m.
Telephone 347741

Top Brass Jazz Club
200 South Quay Road

Memphis Bill and the Shakin' Seven

Support: Check it out Harry
In residency: all this week 10.00p.m.
Telephone 347729

GRAND THEATRE
Robert Street

The Act About Theatre Company

Uncle Vanqa
Anton Chekov
Directed by Anatole Pier Martinov
Box Office: 129 468
4th March-20 April 7.30p.m.
All prices still available. Student nights Mondays and Tuesdays.
'A stunning and utterly convincing performance' - *Daily Reporter*
'Wonderful - don't miss it' - *The Nation*
'Russian theatre at its best' - *Play Ground*

CITY OPERA HOUSE
South Parade

Northern Touring Opera in
THE MAGIC FLUTE
by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
New production directed by Jean Labelle
'New dimension in operatic splendour' *Daily Record*
'A marvellous interpretation' *Classical Review*
Box Office: 346833

City University Hall

The Fitzroy Quartet
Brahms' Op.51 No.2
Schubert's Op.29
Britten's 2nd Quartet
Wednesday
16th March
8.30p.m.
Admission at the door
or tickets in advance from
Ticket World
Tel.457799

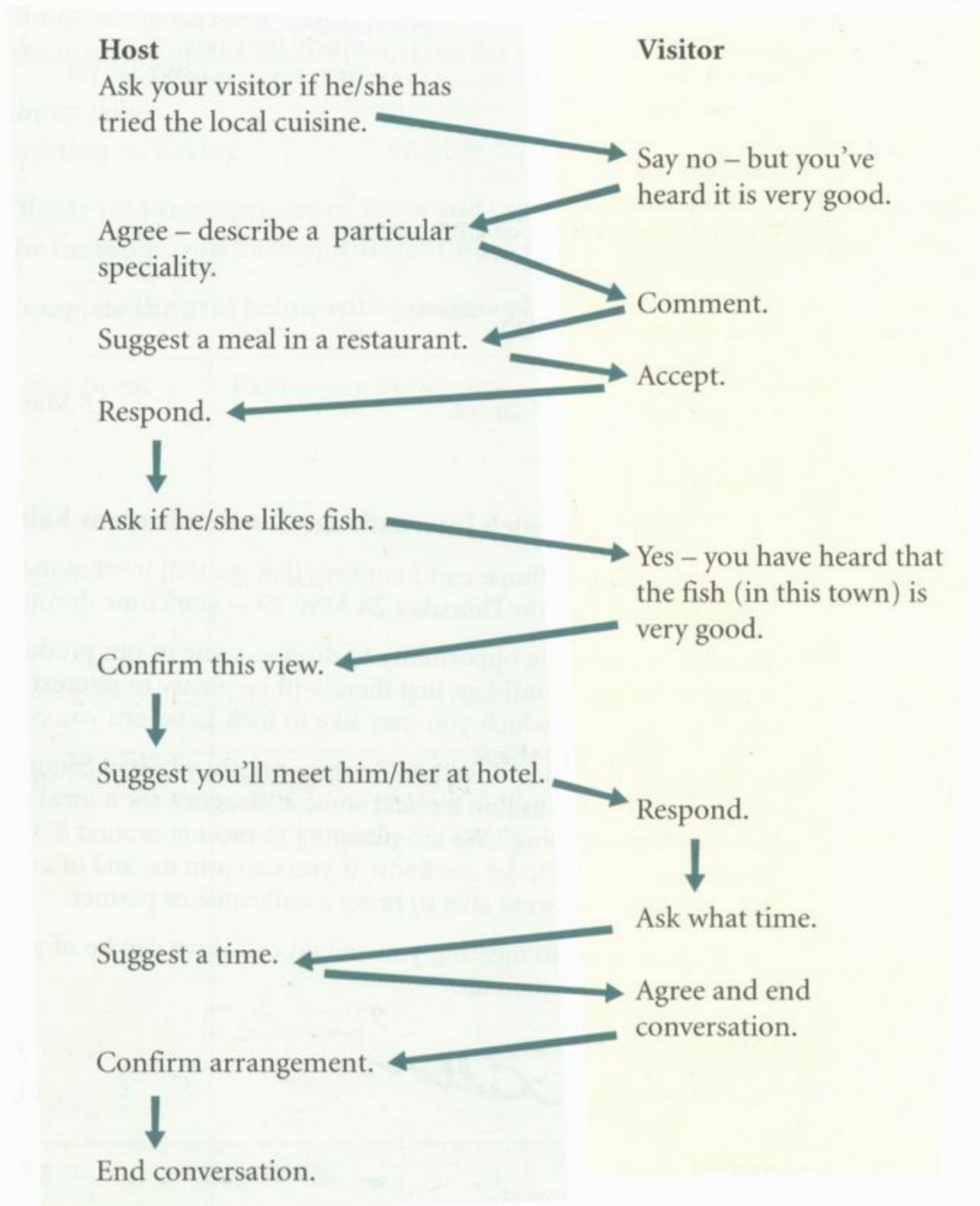
- a) tomorrow night / a show or visit the town / or have a meal.
 b) this evening / a meal in a restaurant / different colleagues.
 c) when you come / what would you like to do?



Finally, listen to the recording of model versions.

Practice

- 1 Use the following flow chart to construct a dialogue. The situation is a semi-formal business meeting in your country.



Now listen to the recording of a model answer.

- 2 You receive the letter below from a business partner confirming a meeting with you at a Trade Fair in Munich. Unfortunately you have to leave Munich after your meeting, but you expect to be in London a month later. Write a reply suggesting a different arrangement which you can confirm nearer the time.



INTERLINK PLC

250 CHARING CROSS ROAD
LONDON WC1 4RD

Tel ++44-181 765 329 Fax ++44 181 765 274

Maria Saans
Accounts Manager
South Australia Bank of Commerce
PO Box 400
Bondi Junction
New South Wales 2022
AUSTRALIA

Our ref. GF6

Your ref.

15 March 19—

Dear Maria,

Munich International Communications Fair

Following our telephone call I confirm that we will meet at the Interlink stand at the Munich Fair on Thursday 24 May 19— sometime during the morning.

I look forward to the opportunity to discuss some of our products and services with you and am confident that there will be plenty to interest you. I enclose some information which you may like to look at before you come to Munich.

It would be very nice if we could meet socially while in Munich. I wonder if you would be free to join me and some colleagues for a meal in the city on the Thursday evening? We are planning to meet at around 8.30 for dinner at the Hilton Hotel. Do let me know if you can join us, and of course we would be pleased if you were able to bring a colleague or partner.

We look forward to meeting you and do call if we can be of any assistance between now and the Fair.

Very best wishes,

John Callam
Product Development

encs.

Role play 1

Work in pairs. Student A should look at File card 3A. Student B should look at File card 3B.

3 Eating out

- 1 Imagine you are in a restaurant with a business colleague. Work in groups of three. Brainstorm as many examples as you can of the language indicated below.



Group one

recommending what to eat expressing preference ordering

Group two

commenting on the food asking for the bill offering to pay

Group three

insisting on paying inviting thanking

- 2 Divide into fresh groups of three and together in your new groups share all the examples you have of different ways of saying the nine functions above.

Complete the grid below with possible phrases:

Recommending what to eat	Expressing preference	Ordering
Commenting on the food	Asking for the bill	Offering to pay
Insisting on paying	Inviting	Thanking



3 Now listen to a conversation recorded in a restaurant. The recording contains parts of a conversation between Patricia Cork and Sandra Malcolm. They are colleagues in a joint venture between two American companies.

Note any similarities between your suggestions and the language in the recording. Note also any phrases used on the tape that you did not suggest.

Role play 2

Student A should turn to File card 4A and Student B should turn to File card 4B.

Transfer

Think of any professional or business contact you have with other countries. Think about any conventions that are different to those in your country and may affect your dealing with people from these countries. Consider for example:

- conventions of dress
- conventions regarding alcohol and food
- socialising
- shaking hands
- physical contact
- gestures
- eye contact
- humour
- the relationship between work and pleasure
- the relationship between family and work
- family matters.

Language Checklist

Socialising (2)

Saying what's on and what's available

There's a (good) film / play / concert / on at ...

We have a good theatre in the city ...

There are some ...

– interesting museums / public buildings ...

– good restaurants

Are you interested in ...

– eating out?

– visiting / seeing ... ?

Inviting

Would you be interested in going to see ...

I'd like to invite you to have dinner this evening. Is that a good idea?

Responding to an invitation

That would be very nice.

I'd like that.

Thank you. That would be a pleasure.

Declining an invitation

I'd like to, but I'm afraid ...

That would be nice, but unfortunately ...

– I'm rather tired ...

– I have an appointment this evening ...

– I'm rather busy ...

– I have some work to do ...

Stating preference

I like (Japanese) cuisine very much ...

I think I'd like to ...

I think I'd prefer ...

I particularly like (classical) music ...

Looking at a menu

The (fish) sounds nice ...

I think I'd like to try ...

I think I'll have ...

Shall we have a bottle of ... ?

Commenting on an evening out

It's been a lovely evening.

It's been very nice.

Thank you very much for your hospitality.

I enjoyed it very much.

Skills Checklist

Socialising (2)

Before receiving visitors to your company

Be prepared to talk in English about your professional field and/or your company and business:

- the professional field you are involved in
- your professional activities
- current research and other projects
- future plans
- the history of your company
- company organisation
- who owns the company
- the number of employees
- the international involvement of your company
- products and services
- the market
- competition.

Be able to talk about:

- your country and your town
- history
- tourism
- museums and public buildings
- entertainment
- cultural and religious centres of interest.

You may wish to talk about:

- education
- transport systems
- the economy
- companies
- exports and imports.

TELEPHONING



3 Could I leave a message?

- Preparing to make a telephone call
- Receiving calls
- Taking and leaving messages
- Asking for and giving repetition
- The secretarial barrier

1 Preparing to make a telephone call

1 Look at the cartoon. What do you imagine they are saying? Say what the problems are and how problems like this can be avoided.



  2 Listen to the recording of Clare Macey, a director of Inter Marketing, suggesting ways to prepare for telephone calls. Then tick the suggestions that she makes that are included in the list below.

- Do *not* try to guess what the other person will say.
- Think about your objectives from the call – any questions you need to ask or things you need to say.
- If someone calls and you are not ready for them, ask them to call back later.
- Desk preparation: prepare the desk – paper, pen, any relevant documentation, computer files.
- Check recent correspondence, know the situation.
- Have your diary on hand, so you can fix appointments.

3 Different people have different objectives in a telephone call. What do you think are the objectives of the people in the situations below? The first is done for you as an example.

a) A Purchasing Manager who has received an incomplete delivery.



- to tell the supplier that the delivery is incomplete.
- to arrange to get the rest of the delivery sent as soon as possible.
- (possibly) to complain about the poor service.

b) A computer operator with a software problem calling a Software Helpline.



c) A Sales Representative for a furniture manufacturer making a first call to Moda Design, a company which sells office furniture.



d) A purchaser at Moda Design who takes the call in situation c.



2 Receiving calls



1 Look at the picture as you listen to the recording. Say what the problem is and how problems like this can be avoided.

