

## CHAPTER 16

# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS & NEGOTIATION

Communication goes beyond knowing about sentence structure, the parts of a staff briefing, and transition phrases to use in a speech. While chapters 2, 3, and 8 gave you an overview of specific communication techniques, this chapter will introduce you to the use of communication for negotiation and diplomacy in the strategic environment. As you studied in chapter 6, conflict between humans and in organizations is inevitable. The bridges that resolve conflicts are negotiation and diplomacy.

## INTRODUCTION

The first article, “Principles of Strategic Communication,” will introduce you to basic terminology and characteristics of strategic communications. It was developed by the Department of Defense to assist in their quest to develop policy and doctrine for strategic communication concepts.

Whether you’re presenting a speech at school, a new training course for your squadron, or a news release for a CAP activity, your goal is to make your idea so memorable that your audience will act on or respond to the information they’ve received. The authors of the second article, “Ideas that Stick,” illustrate six principles of communication that help ensure that your audience will remember your message.

Even if you have a great idea and follow the steps to make your idea sticky, automatic acceptance is not guaranteed. From reaching a final decision at a CAC meeting to persuading your encampment staff to adopt a new plan of action to setting your work schedule with your boss, negotiation skills are necessary. In the next article, “The Art of Negotiation,” the author shares practical tips for effective negotiation.

In the fourth article, “Negotiating Effectively Across Cultures: Bringing Out the DEAD,” the author presents a

framework for understanding and preparing for negotiating with individuals from other cultures. The skills presented in the article are not restricted to cross-cultural communication; you may also find this framework useful for communicating with peers from your own culture.

When negotiation is not successful, disputes can follow. This highlights the need for diplomacy. Disputes don’t have to be as complex as the search for peace in the Middle East for diplomatic techniques to be useful. In “Preventive Diplomacy,” you will read about a middle school curriculum developed by the author to instruct students in conflict management and prevention. The skills of negotiation and principles of preventive diplomacy covered in this article can be useful for cadet officers across the range of their daily interactions, from personal relationships to unpopular command decisions.

The final article takes several steps back from a focus on the cadet squadron and personal skill development, addressing the use of negotiation, creative ideas, and diplomacy at the international level. In “The Not-So-Black Art of Public Diplomacy,” the author describes the importance and challenges of public diplomacy in US foreign relations. These concepts will be important to cadets who are considering careers in public service, international relations, and military service.

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

This chapter's readings are:

**Principles of Strategic Communication**  
Department of Defense, "Principles of Strategic Communication," (August 2008).

**The Art of Negotiation**  
Brenda Goodman, "The Art of Negotiation," *Psychology Today* 40, no. 1 (January/February 2007): 64-65.

**Negotiating Effectively Across Cultures**  
John W. Miller, "Negotiating Effectively Across Cultures: Bringing Out the DEAD," Squadron Officer College SI-5120 Student Reading (February 2010).

**Preventive Diplomacy:  
Training a New Generation for Peace**  
Carl Hobert, "Preventive Diplomacy: Training a New Generation for Peace," *Independent School Magazine* (Spring 2008).

**The Not-So-Black Art of Public Diplomacy**  
Humphrey Taylor, "The Not-So-Black Art of Public Diplomacy," *World Policy Journal* 24, no. 4 (Winter 2007/08): 51-59.

## CHAPTER GOALS

1. Summarize key principles of strategic communications.
2. Appreciate the value of diplomacy in preventing and resolving conflict.
3. Describe principles of negotiation.

# 16.1 Principles of Strategic Communication

By the Department of Defense, Office of the PDAS for Public Affairs

## OBJECTIVES:

1. Define the term “strategic communication” and explain its relevance to leaders.
2. List and describe the nine principles of strategic communication.

**Principle:** *A fundamental tenet; a determining characteristic; an essential quality; an enduring attribute.*

Strategic Communication (SC) has been described as the orchestration and/or synchronization of actions, images, and words to achieve a desired effect, yet there is more to understanding the concept.

As the joint forces and agencies of the U.S. Government have begun executing Strategic Communication processes, common fundamentals have emerged. Through the collaborative efforts of DoD, State Department, civilian educators, and Strategic Communication practitioners, those common fundamentals have been consolidated and refined into nine principles of SC, described below. These principles are provided to assist dialogue and instruction promoting understanding of Strategic Communication.

Shown below are nine principles of SC, with a short description of each. A more detailed explanation of each principle follows. The principles are not listed in any order of precedence.

### **Leadership-Driven**

Leaders must lead communication process

### **Credible**

Perception of truthfulness and respect

### **Dialogue**

Multi-faceted exchange of ideas

### **Unity of Effort**

Integrated and coordinated

### **Responsive**

Right audience, message, time, and place

### **Understanding**

Deep comprehension of others

### **Pervasive**

Every action sends a message

### **Results-Based**

Tied to desired end state

### **Continuous**

Analysis, Planning, Execution, Assessment

**LEADERSHIP-DRIVEN.** Leaders must decisively engage and drive the Strategic Communication process.

To ensure integration of communication efforts, leaders should place communication at the core of everything they do. Successful Strategic Communication – integrating actions, words, and images – begins with clear leadership intent and guidance. Desired objectives and outcomes are then closely tied to major lines of operation outlined in the organization, command or joint campaign plan. The results are actions and words linked to the plan. Leaders also need to properly resource strategic communication at a priority comparable to other important areas such as logistics and intelligence.

**CREDIBLE.** Perception of truthfulness and respect between all parties. Credibility and consistency are the foundation of effective communication; they build and rely on perceptions of accuracy, truthfulness, and respect. Actions, images, and words must be integrated and coordinated internally and externally with no perceived inconsistencies between words and deeds or between policy and deeds. Strategic Communication also requires a professional force of properly trained, educated, and attentive communicators. Credibility also often entails communicating through others who may be viewed as more credible.

**UNDERSTANDING.** Deep comprehension of attitudes, cultures, identities, behavior, history, perspectives and social systems. What we say, do, or show may not be what others hear or see. An individual’s experience, culture, and knowledge provide the context shaping their perceptions and therefore their judgment of actions. We must understand that concepts of moral values are not absolute, but are relative to the individual’s societal and cultural narrative. Audiences determine meaning by interpretation of our communication with them; thus what we say, do, or show may not be what they hear or see. Acting without understanding our audiences can lead to critical misunderstandings with serious consequences.

Understanding subjective impacts of culture, language, history, religion, environment, and other factors is critical when crafting communication strategy for a relevant population. Building relationship and collaboration with the

interagency, coalition, host nation, academic, non-profit, and business communities can facilitate better understanding of audiences.

**DIALOGUE. Multi-faceted exchange of ideas to promote understanding and build relationships.** Effective communication requires a multi-faceted dialogue among parties. It involves active listening, engagement, and the pursuit of mutual understanding, which leads to trust. Success depends upon building and leveraging relationships. Leaders should take advantage of these relationships to place U.S. policies and actions in context prior to operations or events. Successful development and implementation of communication strategy will seldom happen overnight; relationships take time to develop and require listening, respect for culture, and trust-building.

**PERVASIVE. Every action, image, and word sends a message.** Communication no longer has boundaries, in time or space. All players are communicators, wittingly or not. Everything the Joint Force says, does, or fails to do and say has intended and unintended consequences. Every action, word, and image sends a message, and every team member is a messenger, from the 18-year-old rifleman to the commander. All communication can have strategic impact, and unintended audiences are unavoidable in the global information environment; therefore, leaders must think about possible “Nth” order communication results of their actions.

**UNITY OF EFFORT. Integrated and coordinated, vertically and horizontally.** Strategic Communication is a consistent, collaborative process that must be integrated vertically from strategic through tactical levels, and horizontally across stakeholders. Leaders coordinate and synchronize capabilities and instruments of power within their area of responsibility, areas of influence, and areas of interest to achieve desired outcomes. Recognizing that your agency/organization will not act alone, ideally, all those who may have an impact should be part of communication integration.

**RESULTS-BASED. Actions to achieve specific outcomes in pursuit of a well-articulated end state.** Strategic communication should be focused on achieving specific desired results in pursuit of a clearly defined end state. Communication processes, themes, targets and engagement modes are derived from policy, strategic vision, campaign planning and operations design. Strategic communication is not simply “another tool in the leader’s toolbox,” but must guide all an organization does and says; encompassing and harmonized with other functions for desired results.

**RESPONSIVE. Right audience, right message, right time, and right place.** Strategic Communication should focus on long-term end states or desired outcomes. Rapid and timely response to evolving conditions and crises is important as these may have strategic effects. Communication strategy must reach intended audiences through a customized message that is relevant to those audiences. Strategic Communication involves the broader discussion of aligning actions, images, and words to support policy, overarching strategic objectives and the longer term big pictures. Acting within adversaries’ decision cycles is also key because tempo and adaptability count. Frequently there will be a limited window of opportunity for specific messages to achieve a desired result.

An organization must remain flexible enough to address specific issues with specific audiences, often at specific moments in time, by communicating to achieve the greatest effect. All communication carries inherent risk and requires a level of risk acceptance within the organization. Leaders must develop and instill a culture that rewards initiative while not overreacting to setbacks and miscues. While risk must be addressed in the form of assumptions in planning, it should not restrain leaders’ freedom of action providing it has been taken into considerations appropriately.

**CONTINUOUS. Diligent ongoing research, analysis, planning, executing, and assessment that feeds planning and action.** Strategic Communication is a continuous process of research and analysis, planning, execution, and assessment. Success in this process requires diligent and continual analysis and assessment feeding back into planning and action. Strategic Communication supports the organization’s objectives by adapting as needed and as plans change. The SC process should ideally operate at a faster tempo or rhythm than our adversaries.

*From:* Department of Defense, Office of the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, August 2008.

## 16.2 The Art of Negotiation

By Brenda Goodman

### OBJECTIVES:

3. Define the term “negotiation.”
4. Recall the five core concerns in creating disputes and finding resolution.
5. Name the most important element of effective negotiation.
6. List several ways to improve negotiation.

Have you ever had a discussion with yourself about when to go to bed? The word “negotiation” may conjure thoughts of hostage standoffs and high-stakes labor disputes, but there’s a more quotidian brand of conflict resolution that enters daily life at nearly every turn. Negotiation, in fact, doesn’t necessarily even require another person.

Mary P. Rowe, an ombudsman at MIT, encourages people to think of negotiation as “all interactions between two or more points of view; it’s possible to negotiate with yourself.”

Negotiations crop up on the way to decisions big and small—when to fill the gas tank, how to spend money, who picks up the kids, whether to get married.

Granted, forging a compromise over which DVD to watch isn’t the same as signing the Camp David Accords, but regular human beings can benefit from the same skills world leaders use to solve problems. And best of all, getting better at reaching agreement is pretty painless.

Principled negotiation is a strategy that seeks to move both parties away from polarizing and usually entrenched positions, and into the realm of interests. It asks how both parties can get their interests satisfied while keeping their relationship strong. Negotiating well means neither party need feel cheated, manipulated, or taken advantage of.

Psychologist Daniel L. Shapiro, associate director of the Harvard Negotiation Project, has trained Palestinian and Israeli negotiators. He taught members of the Serbian parliament how to negotiate. Unfortunately, he reports, none of that has given him any additional clout at home.

When he was dating his wife, Mia, a painful imbroglio erupted after he asked her to watch his apartment while he was away. He returned to discover she had redecorated. Gone was his “cool” construction lantern. The card table he ate on had a new flowered tablecloth.

“In truth, it looked better,” but Shapiro was incensed. The trouble, he recognized later, was that Mia had inadvertently trampled his autonomy. That turns out to be one of five “core concerns” his research identifies as critical in creat-

ing disputes and finding resolution. He defines autonomy as a person’s freedom to make decisions for himself.

The other core concerns are appreciation, or having actions acknowledged; affiliation, being treated as a colleague; status, feeling that others respect one’s standing; and having roles and activities that are fulfilling. Cross one of the needs and conflict arises. Respect them, and compromise is around the corner.

The most important element of effective negotiation, says Rowe, is preparation, preparation, preparation. She recommends drafting a letter that includes an objective statement of the facts, explains how those facts were injurious, and outlines what the writer thinks should happen next. Even if the letter is never sent, writing it can help clarify what is needed to repair any damage.

If there is not enough time for a letter, even a 10-minute break from a highly charged situation allows murky issues to be thought through and real needs to come to light. Advises Shapiro: “Take those core concerns and write them on a piece of paper. Figure out which of them are being violated for you and for the other person.”

### KEY PRINCIPLES

- **Listen First** “There’s a saying among negotiators that whoever talks the most during a negotiation loses,” says Bobby Covic, author of *Everything’s Negotiable!* Being the first one to listen is crucial to building trust. Just getting the listening part of a negotiation right can satisfy many of the core concerns Shapiro cites.

However, listening—really paying attention to what the other person has to say—is hard. Gregorio Billikopf, a negotiator for the University of California system, offers several good listening practices:

- **Sit Down** This signals to the other person that time will be spent to hear their side. Never ask someone to talk if there isn’t enough time to listen.
- **Find Common Ground** Approach the other person by

talking about a neutral topic of mutual interest—say, baseball or knitting. It helps both parties relax and starts the flow of conversation. Transition to the problem by saying, “I want to talk about an issue important to me, but first I want to hear what you have to say about it.”

- **Move In** Leaning in to the conversation indicates interest. Head nods also help in letting the other side know their thoughts are being followed. But constant nodding or saying “right” over and over will seem insincere.
- **Keep Your Cool** Experts agree on ground rules for communicating problems— no yelling and no walking away.
- **Be Brief** Don’t go on and on, says Billikopf. He also suggests avoiding words such as “we disagree,” a phrase that throws a person to the defensive.
- **Forget Neutrality** Trying to control your emotions usually backfires, says Shapiro. The other person can read anger and frustration in a wrinkled forehead or a tense mouth, and negative emotions ruin negotiations. Instead, mine the situation to find whatever positive emotions can be brought to the table—like letting a spouse who’s fallen behind on his end of the chores know that his hard work is admirable and the extra money he’s earning is appreciated.
- **Avoid Empty Threats** Intimidation can be powerful—but use it sparingly. Empty threats will diminish the other person’s respect for you.
- **Don’t Yield** Caving on important issues may seem noble, says Billikopf, but it ruins a relationship. “You’re not asking the other person to consider your point of view,” he says. Instead, look for compromises. Compromise is like stretching. Stop doing it and pretty soon there’s no way to bend at all.

## THE GENDER GAP

Ask a man to describe negotiation and he’s likely to compare it to a ball game or a wrestling match. Women, on the other hand, find it more like going to the dentist.

By a factor of 2.5, more women than men feel a “great deal of apprehension” about negotiating, reports economist Linda Babcock, of Carnegie Mellon. Women go to great lengths to avoid the bargaining process—paying almost \$1,400 more to avoid negotiating the price of a car. (That may explain why 63 percent of those who buy cars made by Saturn, a company that promises a no-haggle price, are women.) But “failing to negotiate her salary just once will cost a woman \$500,000 over the course of her career,” she says.

Babcock suggests three things for women to get more of what they want:

- **COMMIT** “Given that 20 percent of adult women say they never negotiate at all, the most important thing to do is to decide to use negotiation in the first place,” she says.
- **PRACTICE** Negotiate little things, even crazy items that are never bargained for, like the price of fish at the fish market. As with most behaviors, she says, it gets easier the more you do it.
- **GET TO ‘NO’** If you never hear “no” when you negotiate, you haven’t asked for enough.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Brenda Goodman is an Atlanta-based freelance writer.*

*From: Brenda Goodman, “The Art of Negotiation,” *Psychology Today* 40, no. 1 (January/February 2007): 64-65. Used with permission.*

## 16.3 Negotiating Effectively Across Cultures: Bringing Out the DEAD

By John W. Miller, Ph.D.

### OBJECTIVES:

7. Define the term “negotiation.”
8. Contrast distributive deals with integrative deals.
9. Define the term “culture.”
10. Define the term “institution.”
11. Define the term “reframing.”
12. Define the concept of “thin-slicing.”
13. List and briefly define four general cultural patterns.
14. List and briefly define four conflict styles.

According to Jeanne Brett in her book *Negotiating Globally*, a negotiation is a communicative “process through which people with conflicting interests determine how they are going to allocate resources or work together in the future.”<sup>1</sup> Negotiations can range from a mundane discussion about where to eat lunch to an intricate arms treaty with implications for all of humanity. Most of our negotiating experiences are of the more commonplace variety. Yet for military leaders, the ability to negotiate effectively is no mean skill as the success or failure of the process can have an impact on large groups of people. You may never have an opportunity to mediate an arms agreement or broker a multi-billion dollar contract, but as a leader, you must constantly use negotiation skills as part of your daily work routine. Examples abound. Someone wants to take annual leave while your work group is in the midst of a high-visibility project. How will you handle the request? Another person comes to you in confidence to explain how he cannot work with a fellow officer on the same key project. What negotiation skills do you use? These interactions present their own difficulties when enacted within the framework of our own cultural and organizational norms. Consider the added challenge when conducting such negotiations across cultures.

Although this article will provide a brief overview of negotiation, its primary purpose is to introduce you to a framework for understanding the intricacies of negotiating cross-culturally. The information introduced here cannot by itself make you a competent negotiator. What it can do is prepare you for your next negotiation by giving you insight into the issues and interests at play in both intra-cultural and cross-cultural negotiations.

### WESTERN-STYLE NEGOTIATING: MAKING THE DEAL

When we think of a negotiation, most of us think of what we commonly call “The Deal.” Deals, as they are often referred to in the U.S. and other Western nations, are agreements or settlements reached after a discussion over an issue. We have all made deals at one time or another. In North America and Northern European contexts, these negotiations can be divided into two groups, distributive and integrative.

#### Distributive Deals

A distributive deal is one in which two people negotiate over a single issue and the issue is often the cost of an item. If you have ever haggled over the price of a used car at your local dealership or a knick-knack at a flea market, you have engaged in distributive deal-making. The distributive deal is what most people around the world associate with negotiation. The salesperson or shopkeeper starts high, the customer counters low, and the dance goes on until either an agreement is reached or the customer walks away. The term “distributive” refers to the way in which the resources will be distributed. In the shopkeeper/customer scenario the resources being distributed are money and a product. Each side takes a position and dickers back and forth until a mutually acceptable price or compromise is reached and the goods are transferred. This kind of deal works well when positions and interests are well defined. Yard sales and used car lots are common distributive deal-making situations. Although one can reduce all negotiation to resource distribution, the portrayal is overly simplistic. As Brett emphasizes, “distribution is only one aspect of negotiation.”<sup>2</sup>

### Integrative Deals

To explain the intricacies of negotiation, experts in the field often tell the parable of the orange. In this time-worn tale, two young sisters are in the kitchen arguing over the last orange setting in a bowl on the kitchen table. The resource in this case is the orange and both sisters want it. This story appears to be another example of a distributive deal, but with a zero-sum outcome. There is only one issue and one resource—the orange. As the argument escalates Mother enters the kitchen, listens for a second, takes the orange, cuts it in half, and distributes an equal share to each sister. Mom has once more displayed the Wisdom of Solomon—or perhaps not. Both sisters are still unhappy and another argument quickly ensues.

How might the girls or their mother have brought a happy ending to this classic tale? The answer is through talk. Real negotiation usually demands more than simply taking a firm position, such as haggling over price or arguing over who has the better claim to a limited resource. Yet in most negotiations our natural inclination tends to be similar to that of the two sisters—take a position and stick to it. In an integrative deal, each sister—or the mother as a third-party intermediary—would have drawn out the interests of the other side. The term “interests” refers to the reasoning behind a position such as the negotiator’s needs, fears, or concerns. In this case, each sister’s position is based on her individual need. And there lies the hidden rub: Each had a different need. One wanted to bake an orange cake and needed only the rind. The other just wanted to drink a glass of orange juice and cared only about the juice. If the sisters had taken the time to talk to each other and revealed their interests, they could have divided the orange in a way that would have fully satisfied both their needs. Integrative deal-making seeks to expand the resources beyond those available. This type of negotiation requires trust and the willingness to reveal more rather than less to the parties involved. Inevitably, an integrative deal is much more difficult when negotiating across cultures because it focuses on need rather than commodities. These needs are known as “interests.”

### Focus on Interests

According to Brett, the key to uncovering interests is by “asking *why* and *why not*.”<sup>3</sup> In the early 1980s, Roger Fisher and William Ury first introduced the concept of interest-based negotiations to a wide audience. In their seminal work, *Getting to Yes*, they described a well known integrative settlement to illustrate such a deal: The Camp David Accords signed by Egypt and Israel.<sup>4</sup> The initial positions of President Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Begin of Israel were completely at odds. Among other demands, Sadat wanted Israel to turn over the entire Sinai

Peninsula. Begin refused to return to the same situation that existed before the 1967 war. During the negotiation process, each side would redraw the map and pass it to the other side, and each time the other side would reject it. Like the two sisters, neither side would budge. Fisher and Ury described the situation in this way:

Israel’s interest lay in security; they did not want Egyptian tanks poised on their border... Egypt’s interest lay in sovereignty; the Sinai had been part of Egypt since the time of the Pharaohs. After centuries of domination by Greeks, Romans, Turks, French, and British, Egypt had only recently regained full sovereignty and was not about to cede territory to another foreign conqueror.<sup>5</sup>

In his memoir, *Keeping Faith*, President Jimmy Carter described those historic negotiations in great detail.<sup>6</sup> According to him, any attempt to split the Sinai would have resulted in the collapse of the talks. Through Carter’s persistent mediation, Sadat and Begin were able to look past their positions and focus on their interests. Return of the Sinai was Sadat’s primary need. Having a military presence there was not. On the other hand, Israel’s top interest was security, not Sinai real estate. The issue of land was important for Begin, too, but not his first priority. After much discussion, he agreed to remove Israeli settlements from the Sinai, contingent upon Knesset approval.<sup>7</sup> Both sides eventually agreed to a plan that allowed the Egyptian flag to fly above the Sinai, while Egyptian “tanks would be nowhere near Israel.”<sup>8</sup>

As Sadat and Begin’s interests involving the Sinai illustrate, integrative deals require a negotiation process that requires a clear understanding of one’s own interests and the willingness to prioritize them. In a negotiation where many issues are in play, one must expect that not all interests will be met on either side. The process of identifying and prioritizing interests demands careful planning. Yet Don Conlon, Eli Broad Professor of Management at Michigan State University, cites inadequate planning as the biggest mistake made in negotiations.<sup>9</sup> Cross-cultural negotiation requires even greater time and planning. The next section introduces the intricacies of brokering deals across cultures.

## NEGOTIATING IN CROSS-CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Cultures are complex sets of learned behaviors, beliefs, values, and assumptions. Objective aspects of culture, such as art, architecture, food, music, dress, and language are observable. Aspects such as values, beliefs, and assumptions are subjective and more difficult to discern. These subjective aspects are hidden not only from the sojourner, but from the native as well. Differences in these

hidden areas can act as cultural hooks that hang us up and lead to ambiguity, confusion, and misunderstanding.

### Behaviors

Your ability to interpret behaviors when negotiating in divergent cultural contexts is important. You may never learn to make the distinctive “snap” that ends a Liberian handshake or use stainless steel chopsticks as deftly as a Korean. And that’s OK. What is important is being open to divergent cultural behaviors and withholding judgment. Of course, no matter how hard you try, you will still make mistakes. Once as a member of an American negotiating team in Japan, I was asked to present a proposal to a Japanese university’s chief administrators. I felt proficient enough to outline the proposal in Japanese. To lighten the atmosphere, I decided to begin by telling a rather bland joke about jetlag. I practiced until I had it down pat. Much to my chagrin, however, the punch-line was met with stony silence. What I learned afterwards was that in Japan jokes are inappropriate in formal contexts. I would have been better served had I begun with a humble apology for the inadequacies of our proposal. Humility, not humor, is the acceptable opening for such proceedings. Fortunately, in spite of my clumsy introduction, the proposal was accepted. These kinds of cultural mistakes are part of the learning process. Most people will understand if you acknowledge you have made a mistake and seek to make amends.

In fact, such mistakes will occur frequently in any situation where people from diverse cultural contexts collaborate and work together. Coalition teams, for example, provide fertile ground for misunderstandings and conflict. The ability to resolve cultural conflict issues requires patience and openness to differences in behaviors and institutional practices.

### Cultural Values, Beliefs, and Assumptions

Cultural values, beliefs, and assumptions are powerful forces within a culture. They are passed down from generation to generation through the family, schools, the media, and religious institutions. Although hidden from our view below the “waterline,” these shared concepts are the foundation for all those aspects that are easily perceived. Although it may be convenient to categorize cultures by their values and norms, some caution is needed. In any culture, not all members display or “buy into” these psychological structures. Everyone in a culture is not the same. Therefore, when talking about values, beliefs, and assumptions it is wise to frame them as *generalizations*. It is better to say that Iraqis, for example, “tend to be” collectivist or that American institutions “in general” support individualist values. To do otherwise is to fall into the trap of stereotyping.<sup>10</sup>

### Institutions

Institutions, according to Brett, are “economic, social, political, legal, religious institutional environments that effect negotiation.”<sup>11</sup> This includes governmental organizations such as the military. Like behaviors, institutional structures are linked to cultural values and beliefs. For example, the fictional nation of Leonia is an Arab Muslim culture situated in the Maghreb region of Northern Africa. Cultures in this region tend to be much more hierarchical than those in the West. Yet there are benefits to this type of organizational structure. In some cases, such hierarchies allow even low level functionaries to have direct access to management at a much higher level than would be common or even acceptable in the U.S. Sometimes it simply means finding out whom to contact to gain access to decision-makers. This requires the forming of alliances, locating third-party intermediaries, and the development of friendships and strong working relationships with host country nationals.

### Reframing

When we call someone lazy, we are making a judgment about that person’s character. When applied to a group, the judgment has been transformed into a negative stereotype because the attribution is not to just one person, but an entire group and by extension an entire culture. This kind of stereotyping is inappropriate. Before making such sweeping judgments, [you] must clearly define the negative behavior and then determine the cause. The roots of the behavior are more likely tied to values related to cultural domains such as kinship, education, or institutional processes. “Reframing” is a helpful process for moving beyond stereotyping and judgmental language. Stella Ting-Toomey and Leeva Chung, two recognized experts in the field of intercultural conflict resolution, described “reframing” as a communication skill that uses “neutrally toned (to positively-toned) language...to reduce tension and increase understanding.”<sup>12</sup> The AFINT instructors could begin the process of understanding the problem by framing their descriptions of behavior in non-judgmental terms:

#### Judgmental Statement

“The students are lazy.”

“The students are unmotivated.”

#### Reframed Statement

Some students turn in their homework either late or incomplete.

Some students come to class 5 to 15 minutes late.

Some students have missed up to three days of class.

### Values-Based Negotiation

The story of the sisters and the orange highlights the importance of understanding the interests of all parties

concerned. And, as previously stated, interests are the underlying reason for entering a negotiation. Brett's suggestion for discovering the interests of the other party is to ask the questions "Why?" and "Why not?" But Brett also cautioned that "such direct questioning might not work everywhere in the world."<sup>13</sup> In many other cultures, asking direct questions is seen as aggressive and intrusive behavior.

When engaging in cross-cultural negotiation, one is better served by uncovering both values and interests. Quite often the two are entwined. As John Forester pointed out in his article "Dealing with Deep Value Differences," "values run deeper than interests."<sup>14</sup> He goes on to explain how interests—such as time or money—are shed more easily than cultural values because:

When we give up something we value, we often feel we give up part of ourselves, and that's very difficult, very threatening, and hardly compensated by some gain somewhere else.<sup>15</sup>

If we return to the situation at the Camp David Accords, we can see how closely cultural factors are enmeshed with interests. Carter wrote that "there was no compatibility at all" between Sadat and Begin.<sup>16</sup> Yet with the U.S. president acting as a bridge, Sadat and Begin were able to overcome cultural and political differences. The cultural factors ran deep on both sides. Begin's decision to remove the Israeli settlements was a difficult one for a man whose people had forged a new nation in what they believed to be their Promised Land after centuries of persecution. Carter called this concession "a remarkable demonstration of courage, political courage, on the part of Prime Minister Begin."<sup>17</sup>

As Carter did with Sadat and Begin, [you] would do well to discover the values influencing the institutional and personal behavior causing conflict before [you] commence any formal attempts to resolve the issues.

To summarize, cross-cultural negotiations and conflict resolution require attention to values, beliefs, and other psychological aspects of culture that go hand in hand with a group's specific interests. An understanding of these areas is the key to a satisfactory resolution or agreement.

## INTERCULTURAL CONFLICT STYLES

In their book, *Managing Intercultural Conflict Effectively*, Stella Ting-Toomey and John Oetzel, define cross-cultural conflict as:

The experience of emotional frustration in conjunction with perceived incompatibility of values, norms,...goals, scarce resources, processes, and/or outcomes between...parties from different cultural communities.<sup>18</sup>

Clearly, negotiation and conflict are closely linked. Understanding how conflict is displayed in divergent cultural contexts can benefit planners engaged in cross-cultural negotiations. It also serves as a helpful guide in preparing for any negotiation. This section will introduce you to the phenomena of thin-slicing, mind-blindness, and the ICS-DEAD model of intercultural conflict styles.

### Thin-Slicing and Mind-Blindness

In his bestselling book *Blink*, Malcolm Gladwell described the phenomenon of rapid cognition known as *thin-slicing*.<sup>19</sup> Thin-slicing is the human ability to use "our unconscious to find patterns in situations and behavior based on very narrow slices of experience."<sup>20</sup> Thin-slicing is used constantly in human interaction as we read the meaning of a glance or a tone of voice. We also thin-slice our way through disagreements and conflict situations. Although the ability to thin-slice is innate, the patterns that frame our ability to slice and dice are learned.

The inability to thin-slice is a condition common to those suffering from autism. People with autism, according to Gladwell,

"find it difficult, if not impossible to...[interpret] nonverbal cues, such as gestures and facial expressions or putting themselves inside someone else's head or drawing understanding from anything other than the literal meaning of words."<sup>21</sup>

This is exactly what happens when human beings cross into new cultural terrain. In a cross-cultural situation, this temporarily autistic condition, a mental state that Gladwell calls "mind-blindness," causes us to miss the cues and clues that in our own culture—in an instant—would tell us what is happening.<sup>22</sup> To overcome this cultural mind-blindness, it is essential that we build the intercultural skills that widen our emotional radar and other sensory receptors and pick up those clues and awarenesses we would otherwise miss.

### Intercultural Conflict Styles—The DEAD Model

Mitchell Hammer defined conflict style as interactional behavior that "reflects specific...patterns or tendencies for dealing with disagreements across a variety of situations."<sup>23</sup> To offset the effects of mind-blindness, recognize cultural differences, and help us read the dynamics of cross-cultural conflict situations, Hammer has devised an easy to understand framework that identifies differences in conflict style when negotiating across cultures. An award-winning author<sup>24</sup> and researcher in the field of crisis mediation and conflict resolution, Hammer's Intercultural Conflict Styles (ICS-DEAD) framework looks at cross-cultural conflict from a culturally generalizable perspective. The ICS-DEAD describes four general cultural patterns

and four conflict styles. Hammer begins by describing the four general patterns: the Direct and Indirect and the Emotionally Restrained and the Emotionally Expressive Cultural Patterns.

### **Direct Cultural Patterns**

Hammer explains that cultures with a more direct communication style tend to frame their arguments and problem-solving language directly and precisely. This helps all parties to understand the issues and interests at play in a negotiation. According to Hammer, each party is responsible for verbalizing its “own concerns and perspectives and to verbally confront misperceptions and misunderstandings that can arise.”<sup>25</sup> Such cultures, according to Hammer, tend to be comfortable with face-to-face negotiations that allow both sides to uncover misunderstandings, air grievances, and iron out disagreements. These cultures are also more likely to value those who can “tell it like it is” in ways that are both effective and appropriate. Good negotiators in these cultures are able to assert their needs or those of their group while maintaining some degree of politeness and tact. Hammer also described negotiations in these cultures to be typically characterized by appeals to reason based on facts or statistics. When problem-solving, they tend to “cut to the chase” and more often than not will focus on the solution rather than relationships or process issues.<sup>26</sup> This conflict style fits comfortably on the low-context communication side of Edward T. Hall’s low-high context continuum.<sup>27</sup>

### **Indirect Cultural Patterns**

Unlike cultures that are more direct, cultures that favor indirect communication patterns align more closely with the high context end of Hall’s continuum.<sup>28</sup> Hammer describes these cultures as being tuned in to contextual messages that communicate outside the realm of the spoken word.<sup>29</sup> In negotiation or conflict situations, he asserts that verbal messages are intended more for the satisfaction of social expectations than to communicate interests or needs. When engaged in a dispute, cultures with an indirect style tend to view direct communication between parties as having a strong potential for making matters worse. Another difference is a tendency to use a more indirect means of persuasion. Instead of appealing to reason, indirect cultures tend to concentrate on facework. Ting-Toomey and Oetzel defined facework as the willingness and ability to “listen to the other person, respect the feelings of the other, and share personal viewpoints.”<sup>30</sup> The importance of facework is evident in a preference for using third party intermediaries to settle disputes. Use of a trusted go-between allows all parties to save face while the mediator works to repair relationships and reach a resolution at the same time. In contrast to the direct style pattern of zeroing in on a resolution, the indi-

rect cultural pattern is to approach problem-solving or conflict by focusing on repairing relationships. The solution is continually adjusted through the work of a third party until an acceptable resolution is reached.

When working with the ICS-DEAD model, negotiating teams should not become so focused on conflict style, that they forget the importance of enumerating interests and important facts and figures. These are important to the negotiation process regardless of the cultural context. However, the ICS-DEAD model can provide helpful insight into how the data can be effectively introduced into the process.

### **Emotionally Expressive Cultural Patterns**

In emotionally expressive cultures, displays of emotion during a conflict tend to be expected and also valued. In these cultures, ventilating is generally accepted as a way to externalize or let out emotion.<sup>31</sup> In fact, the failure to externalize emotion in highly charged situations is often viewed with suspicion. Advising others to “relax” or “take it easy” is generally not positively construed and can be perceived as insincerity. In some emotionally expressive cultures, humor can be an acceptable way to reduce tensions.

### **Emotionally Restrained Cultural Patterns**

In contrast to emotionally expressive cultures are the emotionally restrained patterns. In these cultures, strong feelings tend to be suppressed even when a person is greatly upset. Unlike expressive cultures, people from a restrained cultural background are apt to take a dim view of any attempt at humor in an emotionally charged situation. Emotions, of course, are enacted, but are more likely to emerge nonverbally and with minimal display. By allowing a glimpse of the underlying passion and commitment seething below the surface, these relatively subdued expressions of feeling can serve as an effective communication strategy when dealing with others comfortable with this pattern. Maintenance of a calm demeanor in the face of danger or high emotion tends to be highly prized. Consider these lines from Kipling’s poem, *If*:

*If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,  
...you’ll be a man my son!*<sup>32</sup>

### **The DEAD Conflict Styles<sup>33</sup>**

Hammer’s Intercultural Conflict Styles-DEAD Model identifies four distinct styles of cross-cultural conflict resolution. The four conflict resolution styles are: (a) Discussion, (b) Engagement, (c), Accommodation, and (d) Dynamic. As described above, the four styles are further sorted into four larger groupings of cultural patterns: (i) Direct and (ii) Indirect, and (iii) Emotionally Restrained and (iv) Emotionally Expressive. The chart in Figure 1

shows how the four cultural patterns intersect with the four conflict resolution styles.

The *Discussion, Engagement, Accommodation, and Dynamic Conflict Styles* form the ominous, yet oddly appropriate acronym *DEAD*. If one pays only scant attention to differing communication patterns and styles of conflict resolution, talks are more likely to end up “dead in the water.”

Because the other parties in a negotiation cannot be counted on to be sensitive to our own preferences, it is doubly important that we understand how they handle conflict and negotiation. Such knowledge gives us a powerful negotiating tool.

**Discussion Style.** As the word discussion implies, people comfortable with this style prefer to talk through problems, positions, issues, and interests. The Discussion style is direct, but calm. “Say what you mean and mean what you say,” is an American saying that describes this style. Facts and figures presented in a logical format are strong persuaders for individuals using this conflict style. Remaining calm while clearly describing issues, positions, and interests is the hallmark of this style. Proponents of this style believe that discussion reduces the possibility of misunderstanding while a “businesslike” atmosphere keeps everyone focused on issues and not personalities. The Discussion style aims for an expeditious completion of the negotiation. Unfortunately, this method for enhancing understanding is most effective when working with those who favor the same style. Negotiators from cultures where other styles predominate may find a Discussion-style negotiator either too direct or overly cold and calculating. They may feel that relationships are sacrificed just so the talks can proceed quickly. This style should seem familiar to most readers. It is the conflict and negotiation style that predominates in the U.S.

**Engagement Style.** Like the Discussion style, Engagement also has a preference for verbal directness in a negotiation or conflict situation. These two styles diverge in the way they handle displays of emotion. The Engagement style is direct and emotional. We might describe people who are comfortable with the Engagement style as “wearing their hearts on their sleeves.” They are comfortable sharing their feelings, showing both commitment and sincerity.<sup>34</sup> Engagement-style negotiations tend to be animated and highly emotional when compared with Discussion-style interactions. Displays of emotion by Engagement-style negotiators can make their Discussion-style counterparts uncomfortable. On the other hand, anyone comfortable with an Engagement style may read the Discussion style demeanor as insincere or unwilling to acknowledge or engage with the intense feelings generated by the conflict or negotiation.

	Emotionally Restrained	Emotionally Expressive
Direct	Discussion Conflict Style	Engagement Conflict Style
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct</li> <li>• Emotionally Restrained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct</li> <li>• Emotionally Expressive</li> </ul>
Indirect	Accommodation Conflict Style	Dynamic Conflict Style
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indirect</li> <li>• Emotionally Restrained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indirect</li> <li>• Emotionally Expressive</li> </ul>

**Figure 1.** Intercultural Conflict Styles (ICS), also known as “The DEAD Model.”

**Accommodation Style.** The Accommodation style, like the Discussion style, is emotionally restrained, but people preferring this style tend to be indirect in the way they approach conflict resolution. This style relies on context, ambiguity, metaphor, and third party intervention to improve any verbal confrontations between parties.<sup>35</sup> Relational harmony is typically maintained by hiding one’s emotional discomfort. Those who are comfortable with this style are adept at reading ambiguous high context messages. As previously stated, use of third party intermediaries are common. In discussing conflict resolution in Korea, the late L. Robert Kohls, a cross-cultural training pioneer, suggests one should locate a go-between earlier on in the process than you would in the U.S. According to Kohls, “the use of mediators is common in Korea and does not imply the extremity of conflict it does in the United States.”<sup>36</sup> A person accustomed to a direct style is likely to suffer from mind-blindness and may be unaware that a problem even exists. In such cases, a conflict may suddenly burst forth “like a volcano exploding.”<sup>37</sup> When the bewildered American asks the aggrieved parties what happened, they are likely to say, “We WERE telling you very loudly,” but not in words.

**Dynamic Style.** The last style in the ICS-DEAD framework is Dynamic. Like the Accommodation style, Dynamic negotiators and disputants tend to use indirect messages to settle disagreements, but with a more emotionally intense verbal style. Hammer explains that the Dynamic style is marked by “strategic hyperbole, repetition of one’s position, ambiguity, stories, metaphors, and humor along with greater reliance on third party intermediaries.”<sup>38</sup> Dynamic negotiators are accustomed to working with intermediaries and are quite at home with displays of anger or emotion. As indirect communicators, they are likely to describe themselves as good observers of behavior capable of providing helpful solutions to all parties in a dispute.

Discussion-style negotiators may view a Dynamic-style counterpart as an overly emotional person who rarely gets to the point. To discern underlying values, arranging for a third-party intermediary or go-between may be the best way to uncover the underlying causes while still

maintaining the relationship. As the Arab proverb tells us, “It is good to know the truth, but it is better to speak of palm trees.”<sup>39</sup> A person operating from the Dynamic style may need to overcome negative feelings that the Discussion style counterpart is insincere, insensitive, and impatient.

**Cultural Differences in Conflict Style:** The ICS-DEAD Model is the product of a comprehensive research project conducted by Hammer over a period of several years. His findings were formally published in an academic journal in 2005.<sup>40</sup> The data was drawn from a 106-item survey. The survey questions were gleaned from a broad review of the literature related to cross-cultural communication. Hammer administered the survey to 510 culturally diverse respondents. As a final step, Hammer evaluated those findings, re-worked the survey into a more user-friendly format, and administered the revised version to a new sample of 487 respondents from diverse cultural backgrounds.<sup>41</sup> Both surveys produced results that proved to be both statistically reliable and valid. Hammer cautions that “all cultural patterns exist in all cultures—but some are preferred more than others,” depending on the culture.<sup>42</sup> According to his findings, a wide variety of communication and conflict styles are employed on every continent. The following list is arranged alphabetically and contains examples from each continent and region:

- **Africa:** Three styles predominate: *Engagement Style* (West Africa, e.g., Nigeria), *Accommodation Style* (Horn of Africa, e.g., Somalia), and *Dynamic Style* (The Maghreb of North Africa and Egypt)
- **Asia/Pacific:** Four styles predominate: *Accommodation Style* (East Asia, e.g., Japan; Southeast Asia, e.g., Cambodia), *Dynamic Style* (Indian Subcontinent, e.g., Pakistan), *Discussion Style* (Indian Subcontinent, e.g., India; Pacific, e.g., New Zealand), and *Engagement Style* (Former Soviet Union, e.g., Russia)
- **Europe:** Two styles predominate: The *Discussion Style* (Northern Europe, e.g., Germany) and *Engagement Style* (Southern Europe, e.g., France; Eastern Europe—Former Soviet Union, e.g., Ukraine and Belarus)
- **Latin America and the Caribbean:** Two styles predominate: The *Accommodation Style* (e.g., Mexico) and *Engagement Style* (e.g., Cuba)
- **The Middle East:** Two styles predominate: *The Dynamic Style* (e.g., Iraq) and *Engagement Style* (e.g., Israel)
- **North America:** One style predominates: *The Discussion Style* (The U.S. and Canada)

Openness to differing communication, negotiation, and conflict styles leads to understanding. The ability to re-

main open and suspend judgment is the key to effective leadership of coalition teams and can provide insight into cultural differences when engaged in a cross-cultural negotiation. Because Discussion is the predominant conflict and negotiation style in North America, American supervisors or negotiators are likely to misunderstand or underestimate those with differing approaches unless they have developed a clear understanding of the meaning behind the behavior.

#### **A Final Note about the ICS Model: DEAD**

This conceptual GPS, while extremely useful in its ability to increase your awareness and understanding of cultural differences, cannot replace mindful and reflective communication practices on your part. Cultures are not either Discussion Style or Engagement Style. They do not have either Indirect Cultural Patterns or Direct Cultural Patterns. Cultures are extremely complex totalities rife with paradoxes and contradictions. Cultures are never “either/or.” They are always “both/and.” With these caveats in mind, remember that all the cultural patterns described in this model can be found in all cultures. However, the research on which the model is based has shown that some styles are preferred more in some cultures than in others.<sup>43</sup>

#### **A WORD ABOUT PRIO: PATIENCE, RESPECT, INTEREST, & OPENNESS**

You have probably noticed that PRIO, the affective skills of *Patience, Respect, Interest, and Openness*, have been mentioned individually throughout this article as keys to thoughtful negotiation and conflict resolution. [These skills] will serve you well when communicating cross-culturally.

**Patience.** Suffice it to say that any communication taking place across cultures requires patience. Negotiations and conflict resolutions will always take longer when enacted across cultures. If you reflect back on the differing cultural patterns and conflict styles you have just read about, you will notice that most cultures need more time to come to an agreement than North Americans and Northern Europeans, and that is without taking into consideration language differences and other cultural impediments to communication. Plan your cross-cultural negotiations to allow enough time to accommodate cultural differences. Your negotiation may not take thirteen days of nearly round-the-clock discussions like the Camp David Accords, but time is important and must be factored into your plan.

**Respect.** You may not always respect those with whom you have to do business, but in an intercultural setting, you must show respect for the culture if you expect an equitable resolution. Respect goes hand in hand with patience. One way of showing respect is by taking time to

learn what cultural values are entwined with the interests of the other party. As Americans we tend to value the product or solution to the problem more than the process. If we learn to also respect the process, we may be more likely to get the product or solution we seek. Respecting the process means being sensitive to relationships, utilizing third parties when necessary, and understanding the meaning behind emotional expressiveness when it emerges.

**Interest.** Interest, as mentioned earlier in this article, requires that you find out as much about the other side's position, issues, interests, and values. When negotiating cross-culturally, seek out knowledgeable experts on the culture. Be sure to talk to host nationals as well as Americans. And, if needed, do not hesitate to locate a trusted third party to help you and the other parties concerned. He or she can provide valuable insight into the process.

**Openness.** Reading this article should have raised your awareness of cultural differences and should also help you to remember to suspend judgment until all the facts are in. This skill requires time, effort, and practice. But awareness is the first step and that step will lead to the development of an open attitude. Openness is the key to learning about cultures independently and how to navigate them appropriately and effectively. By cultures, I refer not only to other cultures, but your own as well. A better understanding of cultures in general will lead you to a better understanding of yourself and the world around you.

## CONCLUSION

Effective cross-cultural negotiation and conflict resolution has certain requirements. You must do your homework. Understand your own position, interests, and values as well as those of all the other parties involved. Try to discern when values are involved as well as interests. Interests are important, but they are not the most important consideration. As Forester stated, "values run even deeper than interests," and this is true no matter the context or location of the interaction.<sup>44</sup> Sometimes our negotiating partners may place a much higher value on face or respect than on material gain. You also need to plan ahead. Indeed, planning is the single most important element in preparing for a negotiation. Yet great planning will not help in cross-cultural negotiations if you have not visited the [culture] and prepared yourself to handle behavioral and institutional differences, and discerned their linkages to cultural values, beliefs, and assumptions.

It's also important to remember that as human beings we have trained ourselves to thin-slice in every interaction, but we lose our adeptness and become mind-blind as

soon as we cross the cultural Rubicon. Understanding the ICS-DEAD Model can help us as we cross that river. However, unless we utilize the affective PRIO skills, our attempts at effective interaction may founder on the shoals of ineffective communication.

Good planning, active listening, and a mindful approach to any conflict resolution can often produce unexpectedly positive results. May your cross-cultural journeys be free of conflict. It is often the need to settle issues and solve problems that helps us to build those relational bridges that serve the greater strategic mission.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. John W. Miller is professor of Culture and Language Studies at the US Air Force's Squadron Officer College.

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## 16.4 Preventive Diplomacy: Training a New Generation for Peace

By Carl Hobert

### OBJECTIVES:

15. Define the term “preventive diplomacy.”
16. Describe the differences between Track One, Track Two, and Track Three diplomacy.
17. Describe the core principles of preventive diplomacy.
18. Compare “positional bargaining” with “principled” or “integrative bargaining.”

**“We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.”**

Martin Luther King, Jr.,  
“Letter from Birmingham Jail”

Beginning in 1983, I devoted years of my life as an independent school instructor to teaching international conflict resolution, before I decided that there is no such thing—at least not in the way we tend to imagine it. In the global arena particularly—where the causes of border skirmishes, assassinations, acts of terrorism, coups d’état, or all-out warfare have such deep roots in historic, religious, political, economic, and social inequities—resolving a conflict often doesn’t make it go away forever. As the daily news headlines from myriad global hot spots remind us, as long as the root causes of a conflict linger, or memories of it have yet to heal, the potential for divergence, discord, tensions, clashes, or renewed all-out conflict remains real.

As a direct result of the war- and conflict-riddled world in which our students are coming of age, I find it more helpful than ever to talk with them not about conflict resolution, but rather about conflict management and prevention, through the art of negotiation and the principles of preventive diplomacy. Young people take to preventive diplomacy naturally, even eagerly. Most children are old hands at conflict and negotiation at a personal level with parents, siblings, teachers, and peers. Some in the U.S., and even more elsewhere around the globe, have witnessed much worse, too: parents, siblings, teachers, and/or friends killed in armed conflicts, communities and whole cultures devastated by violence. In some places, children themselves are often the well-armed killers, trained by adults to do their bidding. Whatever their proximity to violence, whether they see it on television, or breathe it or feel the threat of it right in front of them 24/7, children may feel called to peace—or called to a “piece of the action” of bloodshed, of vengeance. What is clear to me now is that schools can and should play a role

in helping young people—our future negotiators—learn the tools of preventive diplomacy. In this increasingly interconnected world, such knowledge may be one of our best hopes for tangible peace, today and in the future.

Preventive diplomacy has had a long and instrumental role in international relations. World leaders and foreign policy experts have recognized it as one of the most powerful alternatives to armed conflict, and essential if we are to prevent globally catastrophic wars and other forms of violence. Former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali described preventive diplomacy as “diplomatic action to prevent existing disputes from arising between parties, to prevent these disputes from escalating into conflicts, and to limit the spread of the latter when they occurred.” In the field of preventive diplomacy, two distinct veins have emerged: Track One and Track Two diplomacy. What are these? “Track One diplomacy” refers to ongoing, formal negotiations between official representatives of nation-states—such as presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers, and/or ambassadors—to resolve or prevent conflicts. “Track Two diplomacy” refers to more subtle social assistance by professional, nongovernmental organizations (NGO’s) or persons—i.e., appointed arbitrators or organizations such as Doctors Without Borders—to ease tensions between nation-states. These non-military, Track One and Track Two diplomatic strategies have been helpful to some extent in addressing potential crises between nations or peoples before they erupt again in violence in such powder-keg areas as Northern Ireland, the Indo-Pakistani Kashmir region, and Bosnia.

In addition to these well-established forms of preventive diplomacy, I believe there to be another, equally—if not more—valuable form of international conflict prevention: Track Three diplomacy. This form of preventive diplomacy—which we employ in Axis of Hope, an educational organization that I founded in 2002—involves creative educational efforts to teach conflict analysis, management, and prevention to students around the globe. These efforts help to deepen students’ understanding of the religious, cul-

tural, socioeconomic, and psychological roots of geopolitical conflicts, and to provide them with the tools required to help bring more peaceful coexistence to these areas of conflict. How do we teach students Track Three diplomacy? In *Axis of Hope*, we do it by transporting them intellectually from the familiar territory of their schools (riddled as they are with their own emotional minefields) to a more challenging, distant culture in crisis: the Middle East. For one-half day to five days, middle and/or upper school boys and girls with whom we work take on the roles of Israeli or Palestinian moderates or extremists, members of a Track One diplomatic quartet, or people employed by the Track Two World Bank—roles they play based on the case study of the Arab-Israeli conflict that we authored, entitled “Whose Jerusalem?” a Harvard Business School-type case study on the Middle East conflict.

During the seminars, we begin by having students read the assigned case-study history of the Arab-Israeli conflict that details the religious, social, cultural, and economic factors integral to the analysis of the conflict and that offers an in-depth chronology of the conflict. We also offer lectures on how to analyze the conflict from a negotiator’s point of view and how to effectively practice the art of negotiation. Perhaps more importantly, students participate in “intellectual outward bound” role-play exercises representing the aforementioned and other stakeholders on all sides of the conflict. By the end of the negotiating exercises, students learn valuable lessons about how they might promote peaceful coexistence in the Middle East, and how they might relate the lessons they have learned to more successful coexistence efforts right here in the U.S., in their own schools, and in their own homes.

These pedagogical efforts provide students with a progressive form of learning in which they can hone their diplomatic skills in the safe space of an educational environment—allowing them to take risks, make mistakes, and live to tell about it. All of these efforts are based on four key points, which we call “The Preventive Diplomacy Core Principles.”

## **THE PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY CORE PRINCIPLE**

Classic negotiation and conflict resolution often eschews the “I win, you lose” negotiation style, also described as “positional bargaining” in which “hard” bargainers will do anything to win and “soft” bargainers will give up the ship to preserve the relationship with the other side’s representative. Neither leads to a fair, sustainable conclusion. Preventive diplomacy training for students relies on prin-

ciples and practices adapted from the work of many in the field of conflict resolution and negotiation whose insights now define approaches used around the globe in business, government, personal relationships, and other arenas. While our key concepts come from a variety of sources, the most important ideas in our teaching come from the book *Getting to YES: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, by Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton, of the Harvard Negotiation Project. In creating preventive diplomacy principles and practices for students, we’ve drawn extensively from their straightforward method for negotiation and conflict management’s four basic principles: (1) focus on interests, not positions, (2) separate the people from the problem, (3) invent options for mutual gain, and (4) learn how to talk so people will listen. In our experience, these key principles quickly engage students and turn a complex subject (for example, the Arab-Israeli conflict) into an effective, hands-on learning experience.

### **FIRST: FOCUS ON INTERESTS, NOT POSITIONS.**

For the purpose of teaching students useful conflict analysis, management, and prevention skills, the first pillar is “principled” or “integrative” bargaining, in which the negotiating parties focus on reconciling their interests rather than their positions or differences. Understanding the other side’s interests gives more precise meaning to the problem.

Awareness of the fact that the most prevailing interests are most often very basic human needs is vital, too. These basic needs include power, security, a sense of belonging, and recognition. After both—or all—sides’ interests are clearly defined, it is then up to the negotiating sides to find shared interests, as well as conflicting ones, because underneath differing positions there can also be subtle, shared, compatible interests between and among enemies. Although Palestinians and Israelis—or students playing the roles of these key stakeholders in the Middle East conflict—may not believe in the same faith, all of the negotiators have families, friends, personal interests, and amazing personal stories of love and loss. Students must learn to study the person or persons with whom they will be negotiating, making an effort to understand their shared personal interests—as well as how to make their, and their adversaries’, interests “come alive” in negotiations. The savvy student negotiator learns how to discuss these shared and conflicting interests in creative, energetic ways, and how to bargain in concrete but flexible ways. Establishing a “common interest” focus from the outset of negotiations leads to more collaborative discus-

sion, a better synthesis of ideas, and potentially innovative solutions for problems that previously appeared intractable.

The person with whom he or she is negotiating does not just possess the thoughts, the ideas, and the official positions of the other side's government—or the other side's grade level or sports team or social network. He or she also possesses many of the thoughts, ideas, positions, and interests that the other negotiator deems close to his or her heart as well. If a negotiator is able to smile and focus on these common interests first, instead of always focusing on conflicting ideas and frowning and arguing and walking away, he or she gains much more respect from the other side from the outset, and in the long run. As Fisher says: "Behind opposed positions lie conflicting interests, as well as shared and compatible ones."

## **SECOND: SEPARATE THE PEOPLE FROM THE PROBLEM.**

Preventive diplomacy teaches students what Fisher, Ury, and Patton taught their students: "Don't be hard on the other side." To be precise, they urge us to "be hard on the problem, but be easy on the people," if we hope to negotiate successfully. Negotiators are, after all, people first. First, students learn to build a working relationship with the negotiator representing the other side. Then, they learn to tackle the problem. In doing so, they are taught to imagine why the other side's representatives are arguing their case the way they are. The talented negotiator first separates the people he or she is working with from the problem they are discussing.

The next vital step is being able to "walk in the shoes of the other side." One handy example: before using the "Whose Jerusalem?" case study as a role-play exercise, we have teachers ask students, well before the activity begins, to identify which sides they want to represent. For example, do they want to represent Likud (Israeli right wing, or conservative party members) or Hamas (the Palestinian extremist organization, with known political and terrorist wings)? If a student indicates that he or she would like to be a Likud representative, the teacher can surprise the student by assigning him or her to play the role of the opposite position, or Hamas, requiring this student to learn to understand, and then defend, the other side. We have found that this not only allows students to learn more about all sides of a conflict, but it also helps them to be more compassionate when arguing in favor of their original position at a later date. They tend to listen more carefully to all sides, acknowledge what is being said, speak more effectively in order to be understood, and learn the importance of the old diplomatic term: "We

agree to disagree." In short, students learn that a vital diplomatic skill is to research and understand all sides in a conflict. This leads to quicker, more effective negotiations and problem solving in the long run.

## **THIRD: INVENT OPTIONS FOR MUTUAL GAINS.**

Negotiators often offer little, demand much, and stubbornly haggle over a single quantifiable issue like money, as if they are in a bazaar trying to talk a merchant down. The good negotiator creates what Fisher, Ury, and Patton call "mutual gains" in negotiations, so that negotiators on both sides are able to achieve some—if not all—of their goals together, without compromising the interests of their own constituents.

When negotiating, students learn never to assume that there is only one answer to a question, or one way to solve a problem, or one outcome a negotiator must seek. They learn how to enter negotiations in a very open-minded way, with an ability to invent multiple options for outcomes. We teach them to listen to the outcome options or back-up plans of the other side, too. A talented negotiator will always prioritize and preview desired outcomes, invent alternatives if needed, and develop a step-by-step plan to achieve them, in a process that involves the other side's negotiator(s). We teach students to not only think about solving their problem, but to help the other side solve its problems as well. Identifying myriad interests that both sides share—and inventing options that could satisfy both parties—is crucial. This creative, inventive brainstorming process of developing multiple options is vital to achieving mutual gains.

It may be difficult to think of students agreeing to "lasting peace" in the Middle East at the end of a role-play exercise. But what if you up the ante by setting a time limit, giving students only one night, or one hour after a day of conflict-management exercises, to, say, write a letter to former British Prime Minister Tony Blair or to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice before he or she is to depart for the Middle East on a peace-seeking trip, outlining ideas about creating peace to the Middle East? In such a pressure scenario, students learn to "rally"—to invent broader and more creative options for mutual gains in a conflict. Students learn how to no longer simply represent the Israeli right wing or Hamas, but work in small groups at new negotiation tables marked "Education," "Health Services," "Defense," "Politics," and more. Here, they learn to identify shared interests and negotiate in a different environment, where new ideas—and new, creative options, rather than simply parties' interests—are being discussed. This is known as "diplomatic brainstorming

for the win-win,” during which time students search for new ways to create mutually agreed upon solutions in these different areas.

#### **FOURTH: LEARN HOW TO TALK, SO PEOPLE WILL LISTEN.**

It is essential that negotiations produce agreements amicably and efficiently. Use of proper body language, the appropriate choice of words, and the correct tone of the voice are crucial diplomatic tools students learn to refine before going to the negotiating table. The good negotiator is one who is able to establish easy two-way communications, so that his or her negotiating relationship is, from the outset, not adversarial. We teach students to build a good, side-by-side working relationship. We often ask students guiding questions. “Are you seated in a chair during negotiations, or are you standing beside the chair—or on the chair, or on top of the table—trying to show superiority? While negotiating, are you screaming or raising your voice, or are you negotiating with a firm yet respectful tone? Are you speaking in an arrogant manner, or in a humble way? Are you leaning back in your chair and crossing your arms and legs, removing yourself physically from the talks, or are you leaning forward and with arms opened, interested in and open to the negotiation procedure? And, finally, we teach students that the word “silent” spelled another way is “listen.” We ask: “Do you show respect to the other side in negotiations by remaining silent and listening often?”

Peace is a process, not a prize. There is no such thing as “lasting peace.” In international conflict, peace isn’t something we achieve and then leave behind, assuming that a peace accord or a treaty is part of a completed task, never to be revisited. We now know that what matters is international conflict management, achieved through ongoing preventive diplomacy, including constant educational exercises in conflict analysis, management, and

prevention. As future leaders, our students can learn to see peace as an architectural process that must be discussed and negotiated and drafted together, and refined over and over again—before it is even built in the form of a temporary peace treaty. And, then, as I always tell students, days or months or years later, this beautifully crafted peace model must be remodeled again.

By teaching future leaders to develop trust, compassion and empathy for one another, and for people around the world, educators can help change the landscape of conflict and help create the prospect of future peace. U.S. independent schools are doing an excellent job of focusing students on global issues, but they might contemplate taking the next step in helping students learn how to deal with these complex issues in a hands-on way. Allowing students to participate in open, honest discussions of thorny world issues will teach them essential preventive diplomacy skills that will last a lifetime.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

*Carl F. Hobert, a graduate of the Tufts University Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, is executive director of Axis of Hope and is completing a book entitled Axis of Hope: Teaching Global Responsibility in U.S. Schools (Beacon Press). He may be reached at [carl.hobert@axisofhope.org](mailto:carl.hobert@axisofhope.org).*

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## 16.5 The Not-So-Black Art of Public Diplomacy

By Humphrey Taylor

### OBJECTIVES:

19. Define the term “spin.”
20. Define the term “public diplomacy.”
21. Describe the difference between the use of hard power and soft power for diplomacy.
22. Identify tools that a nation can use to influence public opinion.

*How is it that the country that invented Hollywood and Madison Avenue has such trouble promoting a positive image of itself overseas?*

—Rep. Henry Hyde, October 2001

National leaders have the power to shape foreigners’ opinions of their countries, for better and worse. This is true, of course, for such giants as FDR, Churchill, de Gaulle, Hitler, Stalin, and Mao Tse Tung; so too Bush, Blair, Merkel, Chirac, Sarkozy, and Putin have all changed the way foreigners see their countries. Their influence is a result of many factors, including substance, style, and spin. Substance relates to policies, and in particular their foreign policies. Style is about charisma and personal chemistry; here President John F. Kennedy, who was wildly popular abroad, comes to mind. Spin is a pejorative for a legitimate function, communication—how leaders and countries explain themselves and their policies to the world. In recent years, a new phrase has sometimes been used to describe these communications: public diplomacy.

The poet Robert Burns, in his “Ode to a Louse,” wrote: “Oh would some power the giftie gie us/to see ourselves as others see us./ It would from many a blunder free us, and foolish notion.” Unfortunately, it is probably true that most people in most countries do not see themselves as others see them. History books almost everywhere tend to teach children that their country and their people are better than others, and the media and politicians pander to these beliefs and prejudices. This is true not just of strong and powerful countries but of small countries and even tribes. Serbs, Bosnians, Albanians, and Croats all have very different history books and are shocked that the rest of the world does not share their view of history. While objective histories see most Balkan peoples as both the perpetrators and victims of atrocities, each group usually sees themselves only as victims with many reasons to feel proud of their history and no reasons to feel ashamed.

My mother was born in England in 1894, at the apex of British imperial self-confidence and pride. When still young, she was stunned to meet a young French boy who told her he was proud to be French. How she wondered,

could anyone be proud to be French, or any nationality other than British? It was incomprehensible to her. Everyone, she assumed, knew that Britain was the best country in the world.

Similarly, some Americans see themselves as latter-day Athenians, the defenders of a great democracy pitted against ruthless and undemocratic Spartans. Sometimes this may be a useful analogy. However, others see Americans as the ruthless Athenians who crushed the neutral island of Melos, killing the men and enslaving the women and children. In Thucydides’ famous account, the Athenians demanded that the Melians surrender because Athens was much stronger than Melos and that:

You know as well as we do that, when these matters are discussed by practical people, the standard of justice depends on the quality of power to compel and that in fact the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept.

One need not look hard to see shades of “you are either with us or against us,” which has sometimes appeared to be the position of the American government under the administration of President George W. Bush.

### THE IMPACT OF IRAQ

The impact of the war in Iraq on world opinion has, of course, been overwhelming. As early as 2003, under the headline “Foreign Views of United States Darken after September 11,” Richard Bernstein wrote in *The New York Times* that:

The war in Iraq has had a major impact on public opinion, which has moved generally from post-9/11 sympathy to post-Iraq antipathy, or at least to disappointment over what is seen as the sole superpower’s inclination to act preemptively, without either persuasive reasons or United Nations approval.

To some degree, the resentment is centered on the person of President Bush, who is seen by many of those interviewed, at best, as an ineffective spokesman for American

interests and, at worst, as a gun slinging cowboy knocking over international treaties and bent on controlling the world's oil, if not the entire world.

This negativity was highlighted in an August 3, 2006, column in the *Financial Times* by a distinguished former British diplomat, Rodric Braithwaite, calling for the resignation of Tony Blair. At the time, Blair, the staunchest ally of President Bush, had the lowest poll ratings of his three-term premiership. "Blair's total identification with the White House has destroyed his influence in Washington, Europe and the Middle East," Braithwaite wrote. "Who bothers with the monkey if he can go straight to the organ-grinder?" When Americans re-elected President Bush in 2004, the popular British tabloid, *The Daily Mirror*, filled its front page with the words "ARE THEY MAD?"

Another factor that has fueled hostile criticism is climate change—the unwillingness (until recently) to accept that this is a serious problem made worse by human activity, and the rejection of the Kyoto Treaty. This led to the isolation of the United States at the recent United Nations Conference on Global Warming in Bali. *The New York Times* report from Bali referred to "the escalating bitterness between the European Union and the United States," and the very strong criticism of U.S. policies by "countries rich and poor." At one point the audience booed the American delegate.

As the Bush presidency winds down, there is a new focus on what will constitute the president's foreign policy legacy. It will surely include his record in Iraq, Afghanistan, North Korea, perhaps the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and reflect the pervasive issues of Guantanamo and climate change. It also seems likely that one element of his legacy abroad will be lost trust and respect, and more hostility and criticism.

In general, favorable views of the United States have fallen steeply over the last seven years—but possibly not so far as some critics and pessimists believe. The Pew Global Attitudes Project provides trend data between 1999/2000 and 2007 for 25 countries. At the beginning of this period, majorities in 22 countries had favorable attitudes to the United States. In 2007, 13 still did. But, in 1999/2000 more than 60 percent of the public in 13 countries had favorable views of the United States. However, in 2007, this was true in only six countries.

Some of the largest declines in favorable attitudes have occurred in countries we usually think of as allies and friends, with falls of 32% in Britain, 23% in France, 48% in Germany, 23% in Italy, 32% in the Czech Republic, 25% in Poland, 43% in Turkey, and 46% in Indonesia. (This survey also shows a huge increase in Nigeria with regard to trust in the US for which I can offer no explanation.)

Major drivers of this decline have, of course, been foreign policy, the war in Iraq, and the so-called war on terror. The Pew Global Attitudes Project provides trend data on attitudes to the U.S.-led war on terror for 31 countries between 2002 and 2007. In 2002, not long after the 9/11 attacks, majorities in 23 of these 31 countries supported the war on terror. By 2007, majorities in only 11 countries still did so. And, in countries with even more favorable views of U.S. policy, the drops were just as sharp: in 2002, more than 60 percent supported the war in 19 countries; in 2007 they did so in only three countries.

Of course, all of these numbers can be expected to change between now and President Bush's departure from the White House, but for now this aspect of his legacy looks bleak.

## WHAT IS PUBLIC DIPLOMACY?

Joshua Fouts, director of the Center on Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication, defines public diplomacy as a "government reaching out to a public or polity to explain its cultures, values, policies, beliefs and, by association, to improve its relationship, image and reputation with that country."

The phrase "public diplomacy" is relatively new, as is the fact that the State Department employs an Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy. However, governments and leaders have engaged in public diplomacy in the past, even if they did not use the phrase. The Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, Radio Sawa, Radio Marti, and the activities of the U.S. Information Service and sometimes the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) are all part of American public diplomacy. Arguably public diplomacy is a polite phrase for propaganda when the propagators are the good guys who, unlike Goebbels or Stalin, are only trying to tell the truth about world events. But who are the good guys? Sometimes that is in the eye of the beholder.

Before Pearl Harbor, Winston Churchill sought desperately to influence American opinion and win support for the Allies in World War II. Lord Halifax, the British ambassador in Washington, and Isaiah Berlin, who was working in the British Embassy, were charged with the task of competing with such isolationist figures as Charles Lindbergh and Father Coughlin for American hearts and minds. They cultivated opinion leaders and fed information to friends in the media. Since then many countries have paid public relations firms to tell their stories and promote their countries to the American people. More recently Israel, and its friends in the United States, along with other lobbies, have done a particularly effective job of promoting positive attitudes toward the country and its causes.

But if public diplomacy is not new, the focus on it has palpably increased. What has changed is the belief that the public relations techniques used domestically by politicians, corporations, and advocacy groups to influence the attitudes and perceptions of the American public can also be used by governments to influence public opinion in other countries. Madison Avenue and the public relations' industry know how to influence hearts and minds. Why not use their skills to win more friends around the world? Or to reduce Muslim hostility to the United States? The failures of public diplomats such as Charlotte Beers and Karen Hughes show how difficult this is. Nevertheless, many countries increasingly buy full-page ads and multi-page supplements in major newspapers and magazines to tell Americans how wonderful their countries are.

## THE LIMITS OF SPIN

Underlying much of the political support for American public diplomacy is the belief that public relations techniques can make world opinion more supportive of, or at least less hostile to, U.S. policies—*without any change in these policies*. Some advocates seem to believe that, since American policies are inherently honorable and ethical, all that is needed is to explain them more effectively and people will think better of America. Corporate executives often feel they can improve their companies' reputations, and politicians their popularity—all through communication. Occasionally, but not often, they are right.

Even where press coverage of a country improves, it is difficult to determine how much of the improvement was caused by public diplomacy. An interesting column in *Izvestiya* (mentioned in *The Week*, August 18, 2006) reported: "To change world opinion, the Kremlin has turned to an American public relations firm. Several months ago, the Kremlin hired Ketchum, hoping to combat the 'almost entirely negative' press Russia was getting in the run-up to the Group of Eight conference in St. Petersburg." Ketchum used its "numerous connections in journalism to plant 'objective and even favorable' articles about Russia in newspapers in the U.S. and Britain. Still, whether those articles had any substantial effect on policymakers is debatable. Russia expert Marshall Goldman of Harvard says the reason Russia wasn't criticized at the summit was because everyone was distracted by the war in the Middle East. 'As far as I know,' he said, 'Ketchum had nothing to do with what was happening in Lebanon.'"

Sometimes, it may not be possible to separate public diplomacy from traditional diplomacy—to say where one ends and the other begins. One of the great successes of President George H. W. Bush's diplomacy in the first Gulf War was in forming a U.S.-led coalition that included Muslim and Arab forces. Almost all the world's govern-

ments, explicitly or implicitly, supported the liberation of Kuwait and the invasion of Iraq. One of the reasons for not "pushing on to Baghdad" was the fear of getting bogged down there. However, another important consideration was the belief that the coalition would fall apart and alienate both governments and publics in the Muslim world. This was a case in which an understanding of foreign public opinion influenced policy, and not merely an exercise in communication.

Effective public diplomacy should, I believe, work hand-in-glove with traditional diplomacy. It is understood that traditional diplomacy involves give and take, that compromises are often necessary, and that two-thirds of a loaf (or even half) is better than no loaf. Likewise, our public diplomacy should involve both give and take. It should help improve communications but it should also influence what the United States government does, and what our leaders say or do not say.

In the corporate world, wise chief executive officers (CEOs) make sure that their senior communications managers—who are the guardians of their companies' reputations—report directly to them. An effective approach to corporate public relations is not didactic: "This is what we are doing, put the best spin on it." It is interactive: "What should we do as a company and what should I do as the CEO—regarding actions, policies, programs, and communications—to ensure that this company and its products and services are liked and trusted by the public, our customers, employees, suppliers, legislators, regulators and shareholders?" Successful public relations directors do much more than just manage communications.

If traditional diplomacy often relies on "hard power," the use or possible use of military or economic strength to achieve its ends, public diplomacy often uses "soft power"—cultural, political, educational, and economic forces. Successful diplomacy based on hard power may cause people to respect, but also to fear, dislike, and distrust its users. Successful public diplomacy can win a country not just respect but admiration. Examples of the use of soft power include the education of likely future leaders at American universities and publicizing U.S. science and technology, notably the space program, medical advances, and cutting-edge industry. For many years American taxpayers have paid for foreign opinion leaders to visit the United States. President Bush's policies toward Africa and his recent visit to five African countries were probably successful uses of soft power. Many Africans are grateful to the United States for its foreign aid and support for programs to reduce malaria and HIV/AIDS. Soft power, which obviously has much in common with public diplomacy, relies on culture and values to promote goodwill and respect between countries and people.

Public diplomacy is surely about much more than just putting the best spin on government, policies, and leadership. It includes everything the United States can do to improve its reputation. Successful public relations experts always stress that substance matters more than spin or communications. It is hard to get the public to love a company that is known to be a serial polluter, that makes unsafe products, or that treats its employees badly. Indeed, when the truth is disagreeable, public relations efforts alone may be counterproductive.

## THE MULTI-FACETED IMAGE

People can feel positively about one element of U.S. policy (e.g. relief for tsunami victims in Indonesia and Sri Lanka) and negatively about others (e.g. the United States' rejection of the Kyoto Treaty or the war in Iraq). Harris polls have shown that an individual can hold very different attitudes to the American president, American policies, and Americans as people. The same person may hold conflicting opinions about the American economy, culture, constitution, political system and judicial systems, and moral and ethical standards.

However, history suggests these different attitudes are linked. When a foreign government implements a new policy, people may dislike the policy, the government, and its leaders but still hold positive views about the country and its people. But that dichotomy does not extend indefinitely. In World War II there were few Americans who believed that, while the policies of Hitler and Japanese Prime Minister General Tojo were awful, the Germans and Japanese were nevertheless good people. How many Arabs differentiate between Israelis and Israeli policies? How many Israelis have positive opinions of Arabs and Muslims, as people? The Iraq War has certainly contributed to negative attitudes toward the U.S. government and its policies, but probably also to the United States as a country and to Americans as people.

American public diplomacy has another handicap. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was much talk of a "new world order" and of the United States as the world's only superpower. Before the invasion of Iraq, some American commentators celebrated the fact that they were living in a "unipolar world" and argued that this country was in a position to control, or even dictate, the shape of the new world order, and to bring freedom, democracy, and good government to countries in the Middle East and elsewhere. This talk doubtless fueled fear and suspicion of the United States. Power is seldom associated with popularity.

A further problem is the need for scapegoats. When things are not going well at home, it is convenient to

blame others, and powerful countries are easy targets. In the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, I was often surprised by the extent of hostility to the United States in Greece and Spain. This was caused, I believe, by the tendency of the Greek and Spanish media and politicians to blame the United States for their economic and foreign policy problems. Rightly or wrongly, Spaniards blamed the United States for abetting the Franco dictatorship, while Greeks blamed Washington for "the colonels," the despotic junta that ran Greece from 1967 to 1974. Many Greeks also blamed the United States for Turkish control of Northern Cyprus. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the presence of U.S. bases became easy targets for populist politicians in both countries.

In the late eighteenth century, Edmund Burke commented of Great Britain: "I dread our own power and our own ambition; I dread our being too much dreaded.... We may say that we shall not abuse this astonishing and hitherto unheard of power. But every other nation will think we shall abuse it. It is impossible but that sooner or later this state of things must produce a combination against us which may end in our ruin." Thus, as Henry Kissinger notes in *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?*, the challenge facing the United States is "to transform power into consensus so that the international order is based on agreement rather than reluctant acquiescence." *American Exceptionalism*

Americans tend to view the United States as different and special. Many other countries feel the same about themselves; but they often view American exceptionalism very differently. Notably, some of these perceptions were in place long before September 11 or the invasion of Iraq.

In their book *America Against the World*, Andrew Kohut and Bruce Stokes of the Pew Research Center addressed the problem of American exceptionalism. "Nothing is more vexing to foreigners than Americans' belief that America is a shining city on a hill—a place apart where a better way of life exists, one to which all other peoples should aspire." They argue persuasively that "United States citizens are alone in thinking it is a good thing that American customs are spreading around the world." Many foreigners look at U.S. economic and military power, at what the United States says and does, and see not a shining city, not a role model, but hubris and arrogance.

Woodrow Wilson said that God chose the United States "to show the nations of the world how they shall walk in the path of liberty." And Isaiah Berlin wrote that many of Franklin Roosevelt's aides regarded themselves "divinely inspired to save the world." At the risk of making sweeping generalizations, many Americans see this country as the best, the most free, most just, most moral, most demo-

cratic, most generous of countries, with the best constitution. That is what American history books tend to teach. Few foreigners see America that way.

They often see this country as having the most powerful military, the strongest economy, and as a land of great opportunity; but many people also see America as money-driven and materialistic, with high levels of crime and drugs. American politicians often applaud (American) “family values.” Many foreigners invariably see their own family values as being stronger. Many Americans see this country as caring, compassionate, and idealistic. Many foreigners see exactly the opposite—a rich country indifferent to the poor and disadvantaged, and unwilling to pay more taxes to provide a realistic safety net. Like J. Kenneth Galbraith, they see “public squalor and private affluence.” They are puzzled that we are the only Western democracy still to have the death penalty, and that we do not have universal health insurance. While believing in many of the benefits of American democracy, they also see a country where political campaigns require far more money than in any other country, and where half the population does not bother to vote.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT FOREIGN AID

There is a widespread tendency in most countries to see their foreign policies as more decent and generous than is the case. In the United States, many surveys show that Americans greatly overestimate how much the government spends on foreign aid, and believe that we are uniquely generous. In one sense we are. The latest available data show the United States providing almost \$28 billion dollars in foreign aid, far ahead of Japan (\$13 billion), Britain, Germany, and France (\$10 billion each).

However, when the data are presented as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), the United States ranks twenty-first, spending 0.22 percent of GDP on foreign aid, compared to more than 0.9 percent in Norway and Sweden, and far behind most other European countries which give more than 0.4 percent of GDP. Furthermore, a sizable part of so-called U.S. aid goes to Iraq, Israel, and Egypt for primarily strategic purposes.

## THE “SAY-DO PROBLEM”

Complicating matters, is the “say-do problem,” in that the U.S. government often seems to say one thing and do another. For example, Washington professes to be a strong supporter of human rights, but the world hears about Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, “extraordinary rendition,” our reluctance to prohibit water-boarding, or refusal to accept that the Geneva Conventions apply to “unlawful enemy

combatants.” We say we believe in and want to promote democracy, but we support dictatorial governments if we need their support, and oppose democratically elected governments— from Venezuela to Gaza—if we do not like their policies. We have tried to topple unfriendly democracies, and occasionally have succeeded.

Moreover, the United States preaches free trade but provides massive subsidies for agricultural products, imposes legally questionable tariffs to protect American steel companies, and gives substantial price support for U.S. sugar and cotton farmers, freezing out cheaper foreign imports. Washington puts a tariff on Canadian timber imports, in apparent defiance of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and imposes quotas on foreign textiles. These protectionist policies make it difficult for poor Third World countries to compete against subsidized U.S. products in world markets.

In *Rogue Nation*, Clyde Prestowitz identifies many of the reasons why attitudes to the U.S. government have become more hostile. This former corporate executive, who was one of Ronald Reagan’s trade negotiators, remarks, “In recent years, America has rejected or weakened several landmark treaties, including the ban on use of landmines, the ban on trade in small arms, the comprehensive test ban treaty, the ABM treaty, the chemical warfare treaty, the biological war treaty, the nonproliferation treaty, the International Criminal Court, and others.” Prestowitz also quotes an unnamed British ambassador as saying, “America always preaches the rule of law, but in the end always places itself above the law.”

Successful public diplomacy needs to understand the difference between “real” perceptions that can only be addressed by dealing with the substantive issue and misperceptions that may be corrected by better communication. In my experience, public relations people in the corporate world often fail to understand the difference. Public diplomats should not make this mistake.

## IT’S THE MEDIA, STUPID

Successful public diplomacy, like successful corporate public relations or political campaigning must start with an understanding of what actually influences public opinion. Of course, events influence attitudes—as do policies and programs—but only as they affect people directly or are reported in the media. The role of the media in reporting events is, of course, overwhelmingly important. Perceptions of leaders, as they are portrayed in the media, are also critical. It is much harder for unpopular leaders to “sell” their policies than popular ones, whether inside their country or abroad. If one does not trust the messenger, one probably distrusts the message.

But public diplomats do not have the option of changing their leaders or governments, and if they cannot influence policy they are left with influencing opinion through the media. Of course, public opinion is also influenced by personal experience and word of mouth, but there is usually little a government can do to influence either in foreign countries. This leaves the media (and not just the news media but, potentially, almost all types of media including comedy, soaps, movies, and more) as a potential tool of influence. Newspapers, television, and radio are much more than mirrors that reflect reality. They are magnifying glasses that can greatly increase or decrease public concerns and shape the agenda of public discourse; they are filters that can give very different views of the same people and events; and they are prisms that can bend opinions.

One reason why American views of the world often diverge from opinions elsewhere is that the media here and abroad report the news differently. News reports about Iraq or the Middle East on American, British, French, and Arab television give widely varying pictures of the same events. Most of them are probably accurate in that they report actual events and show real footage of these events. But the events they choose to report and the video they choose to show are very different. These differences may reflect deliberate biases, but they also reflect the views of editors and reporters as to what is important and what constitutes the “truth.” Is it Palestinian rockets killing innocent Israelis or Israeli attacks killing innocent Palestinians? Is it the United States soldiers being killed by Iraqi insurgents or American soldiers killing Iraqis?

If I were unlucky enough to be in charge of public diplomacy I would start with the belief that my goal would be to get more positive, or at least less negative, coverage of the United States and its policies in foreign media. But I would ask myself if this is realistic, or even possible, without changing policies. It is certainly extraordinarily difficult. Of course, public diplomats can help plant some positive stories about the United States in a few media, but influencing the coverage of major events that dominate the news day after day is a huge challenge. The opportunities for American public diplomats to influence the way the world’s media report world events are surely very modest.

One difficulty faced by public diplomats is the phenomenon psychologists call “cognitive dissonance,” which is the tendency not to accept or believe information that is not consistent with what you already believe. Conversely, there is a human tendency to believe information, even false information, if it supports what you believe. It is also probably true that the stronger your beliefs the more powerful the cognitive dissonance. This surely explains why, five years after 9/11, large numbers of Americans

still believed that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, that Saddam Hussein had close links with al Qaeda, and that he helped to plan the 9/11 attacks. It also explains why (as has been widely reported) many Arabs believe that the 9/11 attacks were carried out by the CIA or Israeli intelligence to provide an excuse for America to attack Afghanistan and Iraq. Even if told frequently that this is untrue, many would continue to believe it unless told otherwise by people or media they really trusted.

Ideally, public diplomacy should influence the foreign media, not to present untruths, but to encourage the presentation of truths that are less damaging to our image and reputation. The government and politicians influence the American media all the time, but influencing current events as presented by foreign media to their citizens is much more difficult.

As spin is so difficult, foreign opinion is driven mainly by real world events, as reported by the media we can do so little to influence, and by the perceptions of our leaders. Events are tough to control. In the words of former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, “stuff happens”—often nasty, unexpected stuff. Style and rhetoric also make a difference. International criticism of Secretary of Defense Robert Gates is clearly not so strong as it was for Rumsfeld. But, as the U.S. government strives to influence public opinion abroad, public diplomacy should be focused mainly on what the president and administration do and not just how they present themselves and their policies to the world. It may well be true, that as *The Economist* put it on August 12, 2006, the “Bush administration shows an unmatched ability to put its case in ways that make its friends squirm and its enemies fume with rage.” However, a month earlier, the same publication gave public diplomacy a different spin: “Manners and tone of voice matter in international relations...[but] actions speak louder than words.” As always, it is likely that the truth lies somewhere in between.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Humphrey Taylor is chairman of the Harris Poll, a service of Harris Interactive. He was educated in Britain and has lived in Asia, Africa, South America, Europe, and for the last 30 years, the United States. He has had responsibility for more than 8,000 surveys in more than 80 countries.*

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