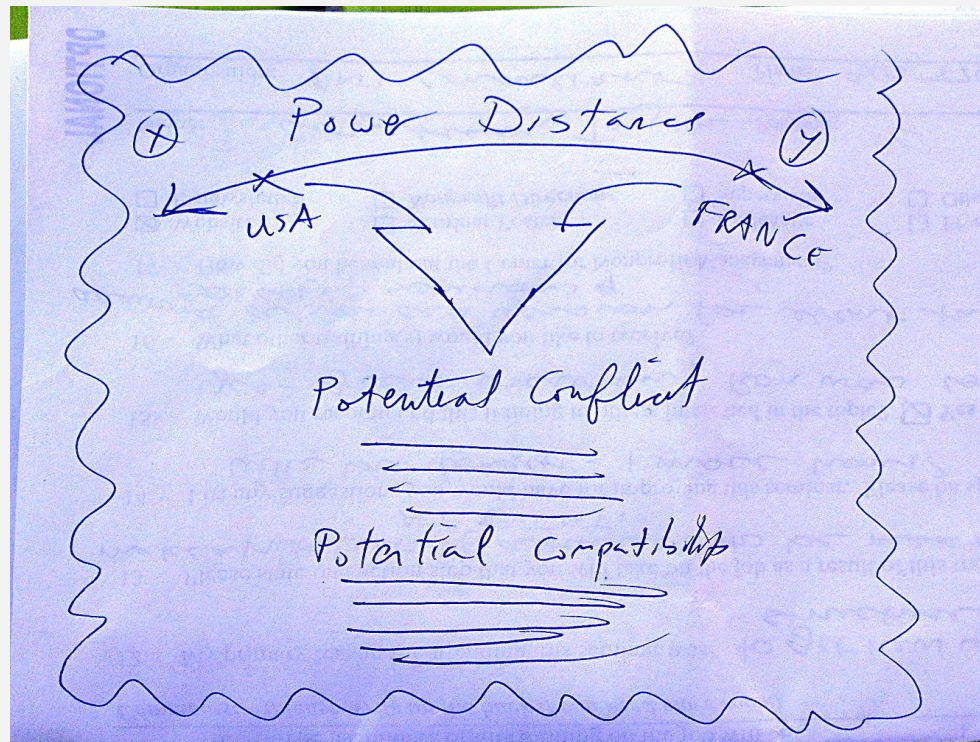


CONFLICT & COMPATIBILITY CHARTS

**FRENCH &
AMERICAN**



**NOTES ON
NAPKINS**

INDIVIDUALISM VS COLLECTIVISM

IN THE US:

- U.S. is an individualistic society
- Organization is a system
- Value their individual role and achievements

IN FRANCE:

- France values a communitarian society
- Organization is a living organism
- Value the project or end result

COMPATIBILITY:

- Different perspectives could complement each other

POSSIBLE CONFLICT:

- American workers may tend to focus on their assigned project tasks and could lead to a misperception of avoiding work or lacking interest in the end result.
- American's might perceive French expectations to do work outside of roles as unorganized.

POWER DISTANCE & STATUS DISPARITY

IN THE US:

- Power Distance is relatively low.
- Employees desire to be treated as morally equal and prefer to be included in decision making.

IN FRANCE:

- Relatively higher power distance.
- Power and authority is respected and adhered to in groups
- French are typically more accepting of leadership and authoritative positions higher than their own.

COMPATIBILITY:

- Both cultures have different levels of power existing in groups, its just expressed or acknowledged in different ways.

POSSIBLE CONFLICT:

- Americans may fail to pay the proper respect expected by the French.
- France's high power distance may come across as unequal to Americans.

MASCULINITY & FEMININITY DIFFERENTIATION

IN THE US:

- Some sex-differentiated occupational structures and pay scales based on gender; some chauvinism in culture
- Stronger emphasis on achievement, growth, and challenge in jobs
- More assertive and higher concern for job performance; highly competitive environment

IN FRANCE:

- Higher degree of chauvinism than US; some occupations almost entirely assigned by gender.
- Less assertive and more concern for quality of work environment; less competitive environment

COMPATIBILITY:

- Some similarities in differentiation of masculinity and femininity; some pay, occupation, and career mobility assigned to gender
- Greater equality in US than France after Women's Liberation Movement

POSSIBLE CONFLICT:

- Americans see French as unfocused, lazy, unproductive, rude, arrogant, proud, and bureaucratic.
- French see Americans as moralizing, naive, pushy, religious, self-righteous, arrogant, and focused on money.

SHORT TERM VS LONG TERM ORIENTATION

IN THE US:

- Young, inexperienced country with Western orientation towards the future; lacking history and perspective
- Successfully adapted environment to fit US growth and development
- Change-positive; change-proactive; aggressive, efficient, and autocratic towards change management

IN FRANCE:

- Older, more established country and government with Western orientation towards future
- Longevity and history of tradition are important to French identity
- Less change-positive and -proactive; slower, more collective approaches to change and change management

COMPATIBILITY:

- Different perspectives could insert American innovation with French respect for tradition

POSSIBLE CONFLICT:

- Different speeds of negotiation; different values and measurements of success in goals and future planning
- Americans can occur pushy, restless, and ignorant; French can occur disorganized or unfocused

HIGH- VS LOW-CONTEXT COMMUNICATION STYLE

IN THE US:

- U.S., on average, is a lower-context culture than France, more direct.

IN FRANCE:

- France has a higher context communication style - more intuitive understanding, nonverbal

COMPATIBILITY:

- The French are not as high as the Japanese and Americans are not as low as Swiss German, leaving the gap between the two smaller than other cultures might face.
- Communication styles vary by profession

POSSIBLE CONFLICT:

- Americans may come off as rude or unkind based on their directness. French may come across as lacking initiative.
- Conflict can lead to hurt feelings

NEUTRAL, DETACHED VS AFFECTIVE, EXPRESSED

IN THE US:

- Less emphasis on objectivity and detachment in approach
- Use of emotion, sentimentalism, and feelings in communication and decision making
- Expressed and extraverted

IN FRANCE:

- Similar approach to US; more subjective and less detached
- Use of emotion, sentimentalism, and feelings in communication and decision making
- Similarly expressed and extraverted

COMPATIBILITY:

- Mutual use of subjective elements, such as pride, nationalism, emotionalism, competitiveness, etc.
- Similarity in affective level of expression

POSSIBLE CONFLICT:

- Nonverbal cues are also more extraverted and expressed in both cultures
- Greater chance of misinterpretation of non-verbal or emotional expression

SPECIFIC VS DIFFUSE WORK INVOLVEMENT

IN THE US:

- Employees valued predominantly for specific function, role, or output rather than unique contribution
- Narrow work involvement; people seen as interchangeable
- Silos of responsibility; less attention on relationships

IN FRANCE:

- Whole person valued and appreciation for overall contribution
- Work involvement more diffuse than specific or narrow

COMPATIBILITY:

- On a team together, both perspectives could make for a more effective team.

POSSIBLE CONFLICT:

- potential that US might overlook the value of people
- French might perceive the US as being uncaring

ACHIEVEMENT VS PRESCRIPTION IN STATUS

IN THE US:

- Status based on achievement; broad cultural belief in individual possibility to achieve the "American Dream"
- Highly competitive reward systems; career mobility also highly competitive and political
- Performance-based evaluations; emphasis on quantity over quality

IN FRANCE:

- France is more prescriptive
- Reward system not as upwardly mobile as US
- Status and rewards directly correlate to class and education

COMPATIBILITY:

- Both perspectives motivate team members to contribute.

POSSIBLE CONFLICT:

- Americans may perceive French as being elitist
- French may prefer to interact with others at a perceived equal status.