

High/Low Context Characteristics

High Context

Low Context

Association	
Relationships build up slowly and are stable. A person easily distinguishes between people inside and people outside of one's circle.	Relationships tend to begin and end quickly. The boundary of one's circle is not always clear. Often, many people can be inside one's circle.
Interaction	
Communication has a strong emphasis on nonverbal behavior such as voice tone, facial expression, gestures, eye movement. The context (situation, people, nonverbal elements) is more important than words.	Communication has a strong emphasis on the verbal message. Context is less important than words. The verbal message is direct and spells things out exactly.
Territoriality	
Space belongs to everyone. People tend to stand close to each other. Sharing of space is easily tolerated.	Space is compartmentalized and privately owned. Privacy is valued so people tend to space themselves farther apart from each other.
Temporality	
Time is not easily scheduled; needs of people take priority over keeping to a set time. What is valued is that activity gets done.	Things are scheduled to be done at particular times, and usually one thing is scheduled at a time. What is valued is that activity is done efficiently.
Learning	
<p>Knowledge is embedded in the situation; all things are connected, synthesized, and global. Multiple sources of information are used. Thinking is deductive.</p> <p>Learning best occurs by first observing others as they model or demonstrate and then practicing.</p>	<p>Knowledge tends to be fragmented and compartmentalized. One or few sources of information are used to develop knowledge. Thinking is inductive and focuses on the details.</p> <p>Learning best occurs by following explicit directions and explanations of others.</p>

Adapted from Hall, 1990, Halverson, 1993, Halverson & Tirmizi , 2008.