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Competence centres for the development of sustainable tourism and innovative financial management strategies to increase the positive impact of local tourism in Thailand and Vietnam

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WP 2 – Capacity Building – Training for Trainers

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences &

FH JOANNEUM

Stakeholder communication of sustainable tourism in different cultural contexts

Part Two: Cultural Contexts

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Fundamental base of all learning processes?

= Which fundamental **precondition** of successful communication
(= „behavior coordination process")?

Widespread Myth:

"Those, who do not understand despite clear explanation, are NOT WILLING to understand."
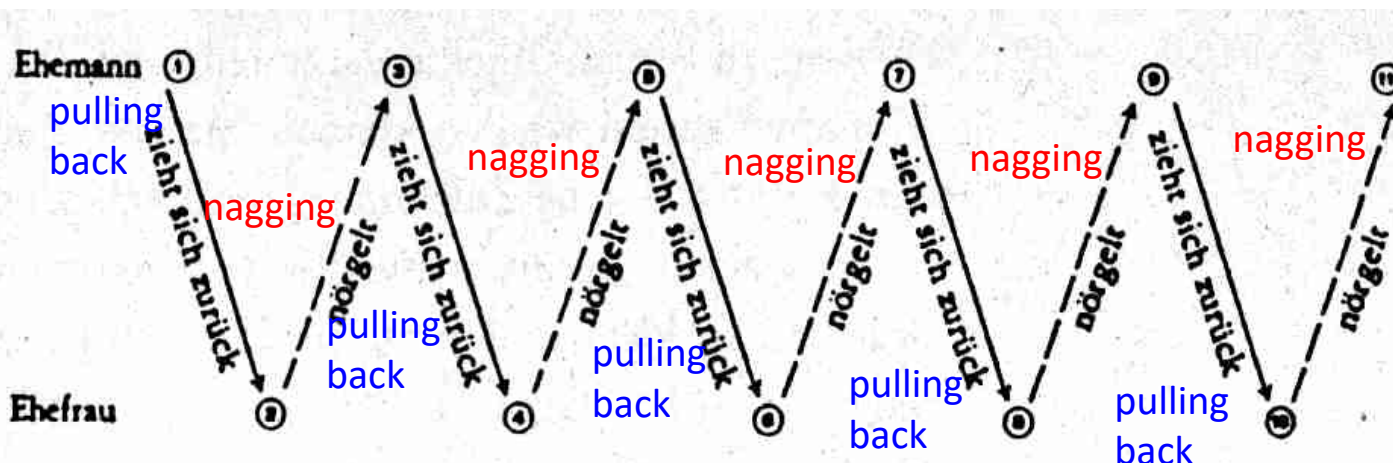

(Typical confidence deficit crisis syndrome)

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Communication in crisis:

"You do not want to understand me!"

Example:

Typical course of a marital strike:

She nags, he pulls back ...

Ehemann ①

pulling back

nagging

zieht sich zurück

nagging

pulling back

nörgelt

zieht sich zurück

nagging

nörgelt

pulling back

zieht sich zurück

nagging

nörgelt

pulling back

zieht sich zurück

nagging

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nörgelt

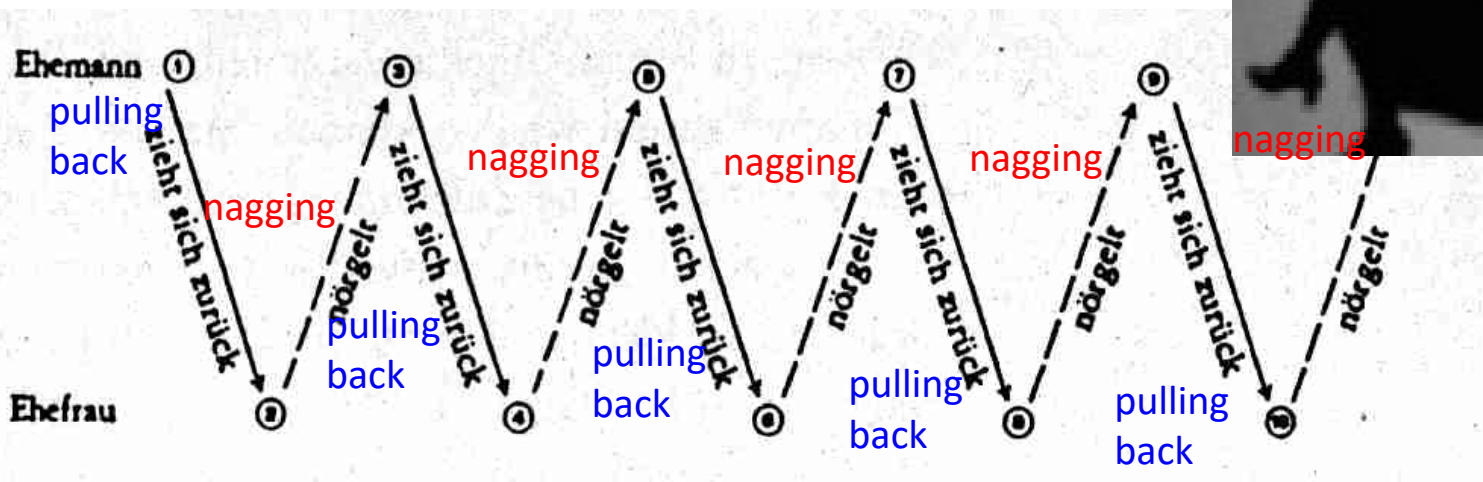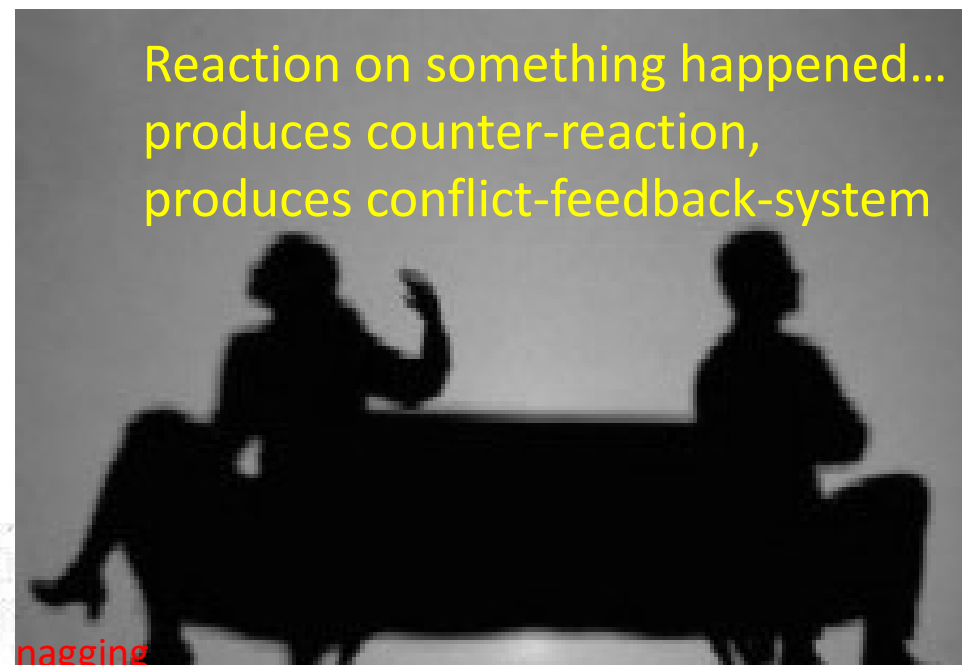Ehefrau

Communicational "law" behind

Every act of communication has **its own history**,

= the **expression of former experience**
with each other...

Reaction on something happened...
produces counter-reaction,
produces conflict-feedback-system

Ehemann
pulling
back
nagging
nagging   nagging   nagging   nagging
pulling
back
pulling
back
pulling
back
pulling
back
Ehefrau
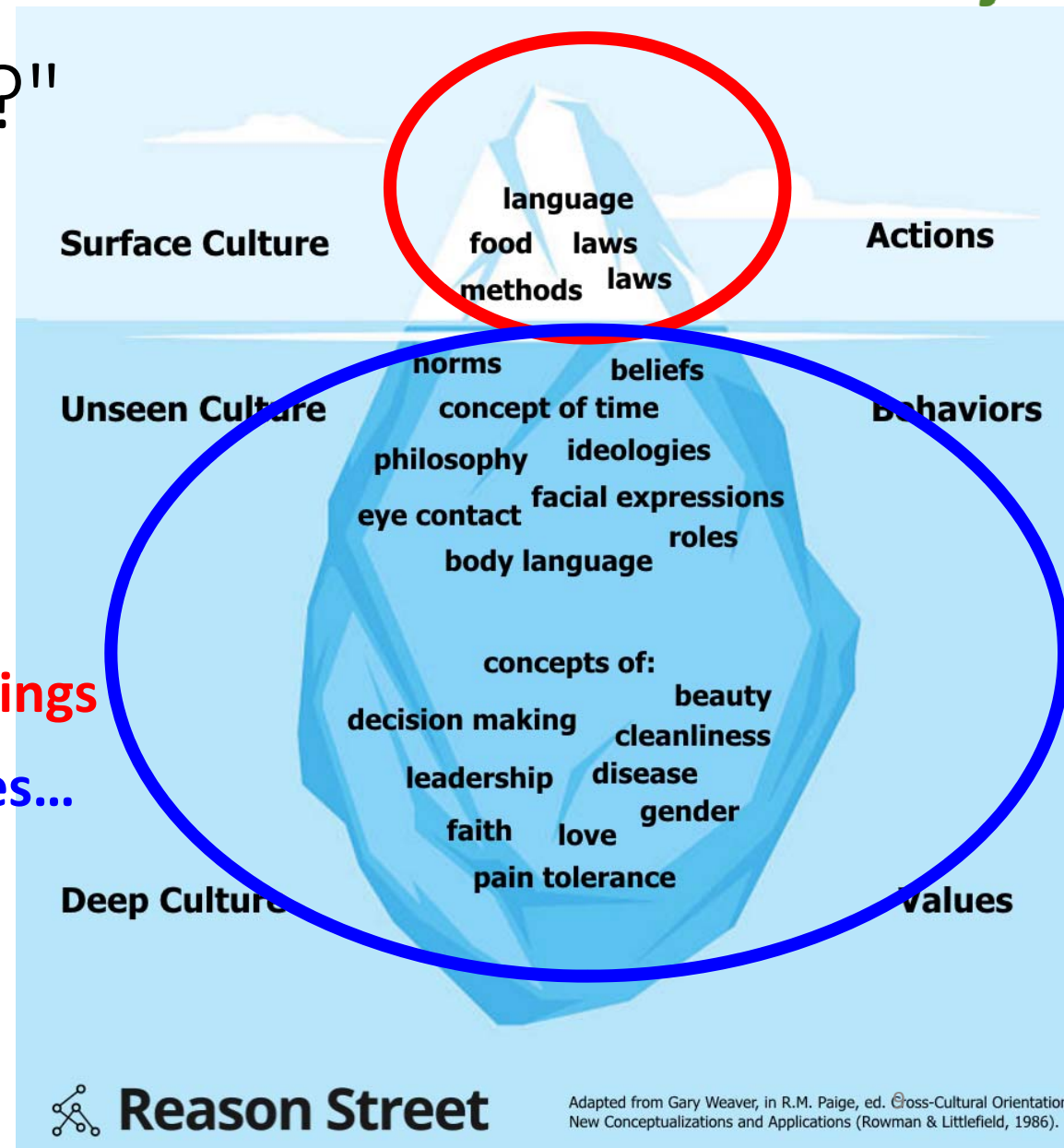
Most important „asset"
of sustainable communication with „strangers":

- **Confidence building**

"What can(n't) I perceive?"

- **visible level**
- **hidden factors**
- **needs**
- **feelings**
- **Point of view**
- **values**
- **own problems**
- **relationship problems**

- **(Perceived) Circumstances**
- **(Understood) Information**
- **misunderstandings**
- **Bad experiences…**

Surface Culture — language, food, laws, methods, laws — Actions

Unseen Culture — norms, beliefs, concept of time, philosophy, ideologies, eye contact, facial expressions, roles, body language — Behaviors

Deep Culture — concepts of: decision making, beauty, cleanliness, leadership, disease, gender, faith, love, pain tolerance — Values

Reason Street

Adapted from Gary Weaver, in R.M. Paige, ed. Cross-Cultural Orientation
New Conceptualizations and Applications (Rowman & Littlefield, 1986).

Example in Village Development Context

- Participative discussion with village people.

- Explicit Problem "The building created by you doesn't fit" ...

- What is underneath the visible iceberg?

  What are the hidden needs, conflicts?

Exercise 1: Your field experiences

- Make teams of **4 persons**

- **Remember a personal experience** of a development case, where
  - Communication with target group didn't work at first
  - ...you found out about „**hidden agenda**", later
  - ...which helped you to better understand your target group...
  - ...and to communicate with them.

- Each member **tells the group**, summing up, the episode

- Decide together one case to tell to the audience.

The **Do's and Don'ts** of Stakeholder communication

for Sustainable Tourism in IC contextes 1

1. Stakeholder communication is **implemented in steps** related to
   1. situation analysis (which stakeholders…)
   2. step planning,
   3. production and action and
   4. reflection phases.

2. Nobody knows everything but *everybody knows something*.
   - **Participatory situation and audience analyses** allow project planners
   - to **understand** the real problems, barriers and chances ("iceberg")

3. **Don't** jump to conclusions or **assumptions**,
   - as far as knowledge, attitudes or practices (KAP) of relevant groups are concerned.
   - Do your homework, for example a KAP **analysis** as part of a stakeholder comm. plan.

Do's and Don'ts 2: Those, who ask, are leading...

- **Listen before you talk**.
  - Make sure you **understand your ,target groups'** before you start acting.

- **Ask the right questions**:
  - **Who** should do what?

  - **Why** are they not doing it?

  - What are the **communication barriers**?

  - What are the **advantages**, incentives and benefits of the proposed ,**new' practices**?

  - What are the advantages, incentives and benefits of the prevailing ,**old**' practices?

- How and where do you **reach relevant groups?**

- Which traditional and mass media or

  communication channels do they use?

- **Who do they trust**, who not?

- **Who** should you **win over as a partner**? (Key person)

Do's and Don'ts 3: Different Target Groups

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- **Involve** relevant groups **pro-actively**,
  - from the **start** and **continuously** –
  - not only in communication processes
  - but also in media productions.

Men and **women** are **different**.

So are **old** and **young**.

- **Segmentizing** your **audiences**, therefore, is the nuts and bolts of any communication strategy.

When Women Pack

Start a month early

Make a ton of lists. Packing for yourself and all the kids.

Worry about what you forgot

Stage things

Plan activites for kids

Fit it all in

Remember all random items

When Men Pack

Five minutes before departure:

And ... done.

Different groups need different media
- that correspond with their
  living conditions and communication habits.

The same is true about **their interests**
- through **appropriate communication channels**.

Do's and Don'ts 4: Appropriate Medias

- Every media is good for something,
    - but **no medium** is **good for everything**.

    - It is why a **balanced media mix** is a crucial success factor.

    - Depending on…
        - the **communication objectives** and
        - The kind of **social groups** to be involved and to be addressed.
- *"The media is the message"*

Do's and Don'ts 5: Group-referential Priorities

- Work **with** **instead of** **for** **these groups**,
  - also as far as selected media and messages are concerned.

- **Projects** should **fit people**, **not** the other **way around**.

- Way of ‚sustainable development', ‚resource management' or ‚biodiversity conservation' –
  and **their benefits** ultimately
  depends on **their respective.**

- Stakeholder communication should
  - **help overcome barriers**
  - **create incentives** and
  - **offer capacity**

Do's and Don'ts 6:
## Communication for sustainable tourism needs…
sustainable communication processes…

- …requiring **continuous process documentation**.
  - …helps **identifying communication problems**
  - and **innovative problem solutions**.

- Do **good and talk about it.**
  - Don't talk before you haven't done good.
  - **Success stories** and easily visible impacts should be communicated beyond the immediate scope of the project.

Appendix: Cultural dimensions (Hofstede)

- Individualism vs collectivism

- masculinity vs femininity

- uncertainty avoidance index

- indulgence vs restraints

- *long*-term-orientation

  vs *short*-term-orientation

- monochrome vs polychrome concepts

- high-context vs low-context
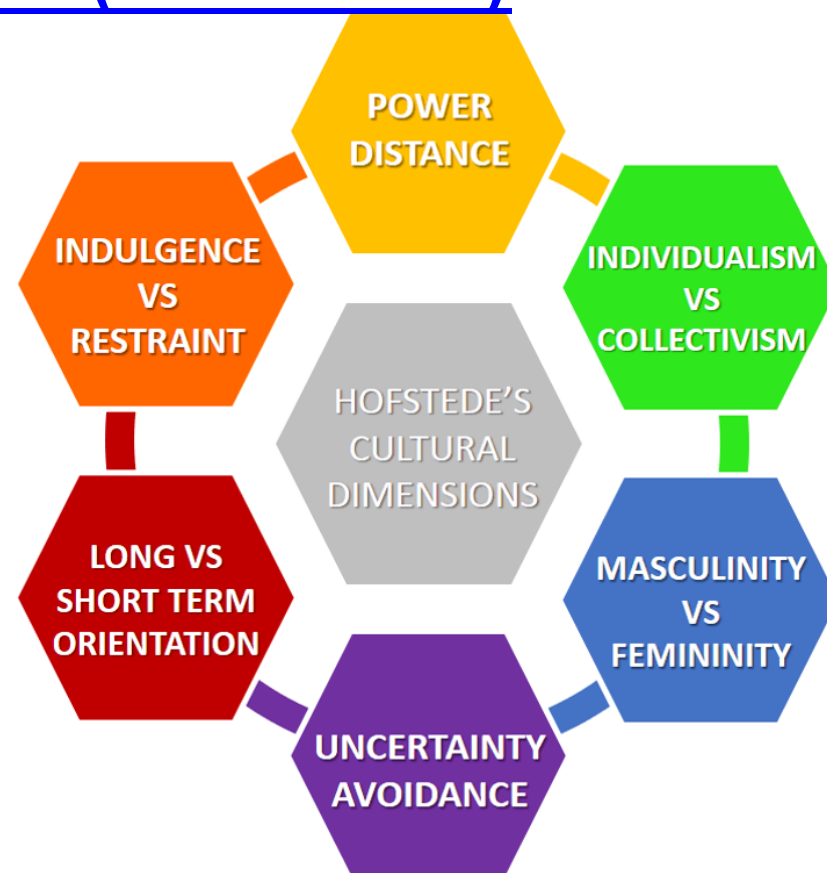
Individualism vs collectivism

- Individualism: a preference for a **loosely-knit social framework** in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves and their immediate families.

- Collectivism: a preference for a **tightly-knit framework** in society in which individuals can expect their **relatives** or members of a particular ingroup **to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.**

- A society's position on this dimension is reflected in whether **people's self-image is defined in terms of "I" or "we."**

Masculinity vs femininity

- *Masculinity*: preference for *achievement, heroism*, assertiveness, and *material rewards* for success. Society at large is *more competitive*.

- *Femininity*: preference **for *cooperation*, modesty, *caring* for the weak and *quality of life*. Society at large is more *consensus-oriented*.

- **Business context**: also related to as "*tough versus tender*" cultures

Uncertainty avoidance index

- UAI: degree to which the members of a society **feel uncomfortable with uncertainty** and ambiguity.

- How **deals** a society **with** the fact that the **future** can never be known:

- should we try to **control** the future

- or just let it **happen**?

- Strong UAI: **rigid codes of belief** and behavior, **intolerant of unorthodox behavior** and ideas.

- Weak UAI: more **relaxed attitude** in which **practice counts more than principles**.

Indulgence vs restraints

- Indulgence: allowing **relatively free gratification** of basic and natural human drives related to **enjoying life** and having fun.

- Restraint: suppressing **gratification of needs,** regulating by means of **strict social norms.**

Long-term-orientation vs short-term-orientation

- How to maintain **links with its own past** while dealing with the challenges of the present and the future: differently prioritizing these two existential goals.

- LTO: prefer to maintain **time-honored traditions** and norms while **viewing societal change with suspicion**.

- STO: more **pragmatic approach**: they **encourage thrift** and efforts in **modern education** as a way to prepare for the future.

- **Business context**: "(short-term) **normative** versus (long-term) **pragmatic**" (PRA).

Monochrome vs polychrome concepts

- Monochrome Cultures: Time is seen as linear **structure** in oder to **control**: time concept of industrial revolution (doing one thing after another; "time is money", breaks are seen as disturbing; priority of time tables, duties – instead of communication and persons; property is highly valued; lending is critical; short-term personal relationships)

- Polychrome Cultures: Time is seen as a kind of space a society is living in (doing more thing parallel; time is "here and now", breaks are welcome; time tables give orientation only; communication and persons instead of duties; property is relative; lending is normal; life-long personal relationships)

- **Business, Organizations:**

- Monochrome structures: Information in business circulates slowly, following formal ways

- Polychrome structures: Information are circulation fast, following informal ways

High-context vs low-context

- HC: how strongly **protocols and tradition dictate** communication
- Communication tends to move **from the general to the specific**: creating context, practicing **indirectness,** developing trust first, depend on a shared cultural context to **carry meaning.**
- LC: communication tends to be **more to the poin**t; practicing **explicitness and directness** in; "trust" and "meaning" is delegated to "abstract structures" (legal system, "general knowledge")
- **To a LC culture**, HC-style of communication can look **undisciplined**, evasive, untrustworthy, uninformed (dare we say "stupid"?), or just plain lazy and a waste of precious time.
- **To a HH culture**, the explicitness of LC style can look boorish, pushy, **patronizing**, indelicate, distrustful, unnecessarily detailed ("stupid"?), and insensitive.

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