Cross-cultural psychology of organizational behavior

Lecture 2
7 - dimensions of cultural diversity in business and organizations (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's approach)

Fons Trompenaars is a Dutch organizational theorist, management consultant, and author of many books in the field of cross-cultural communication and management.
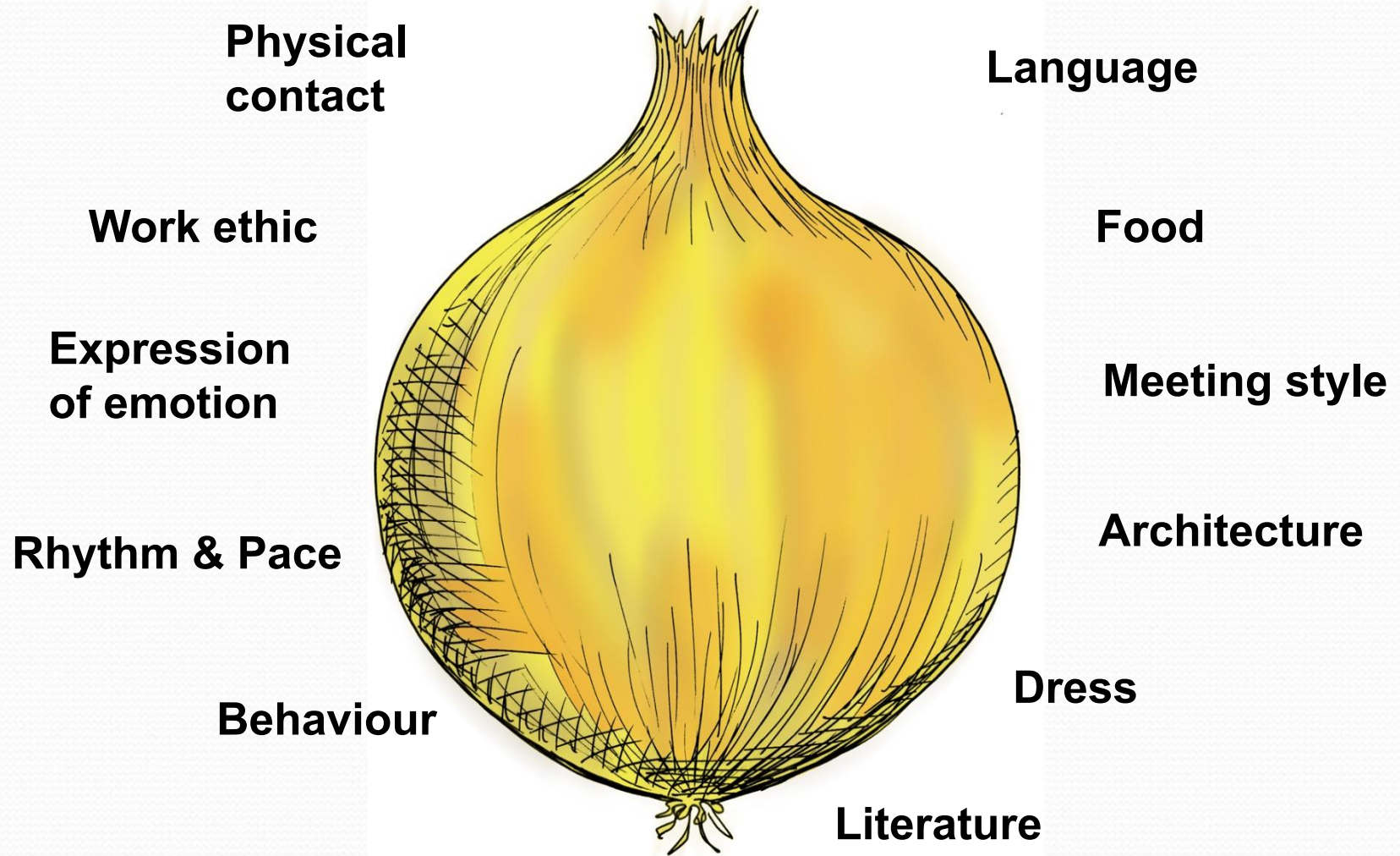
Charles Hampden-Turner is a British management philosopher, and Senior Research Associate at the Judge Business School at the University of Cambridge since 1990. He is the creator of Dilemma Theory, and co-founder and Director of Research and Development at the Trompenaars-Hampden-Turner Group, in Amsterdam.
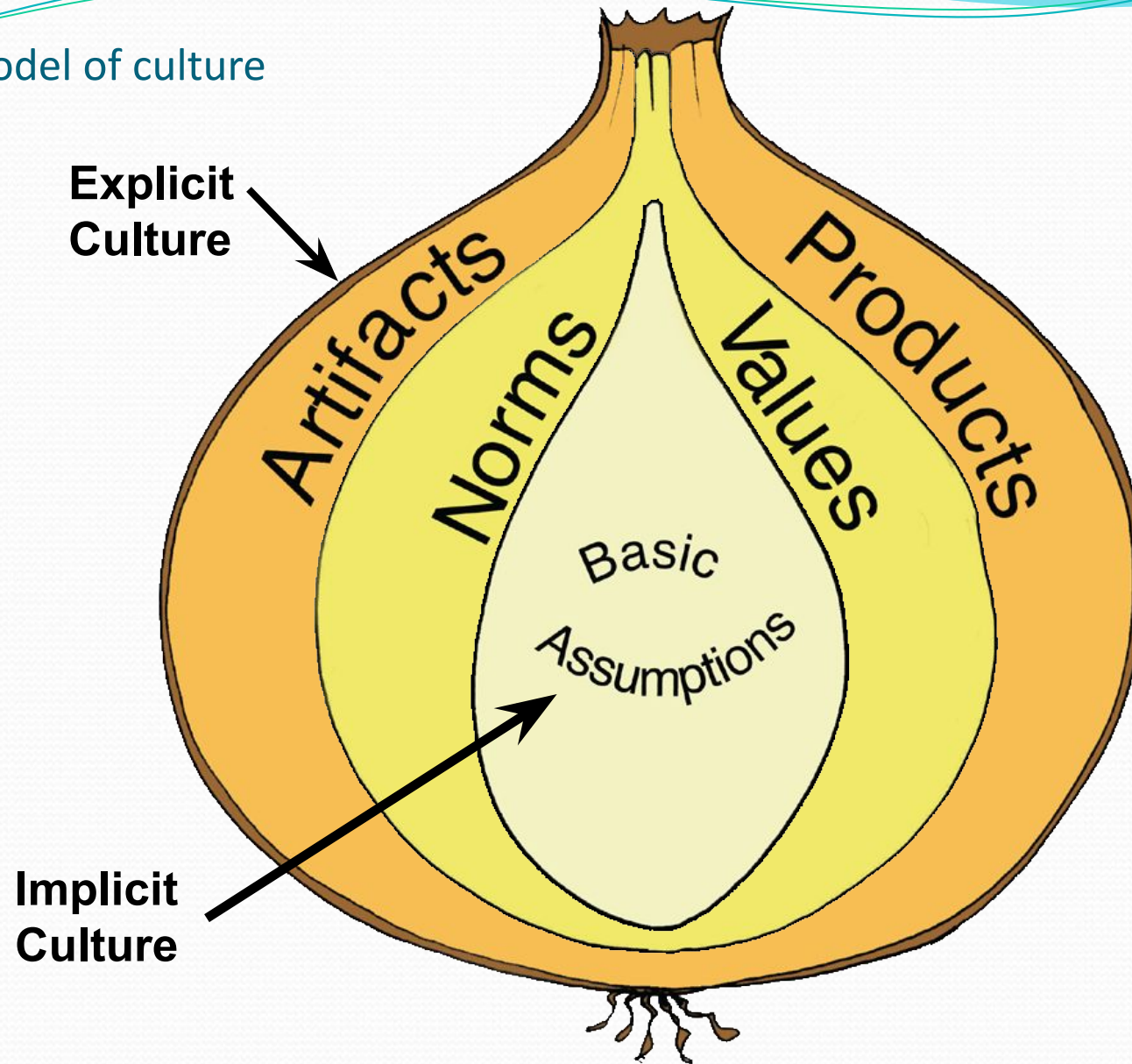

...penaars

Charles Hampden-Turner

A model of culture

Physical contact

Language

Work ethic

Food

Expression of emotion

Meeting style

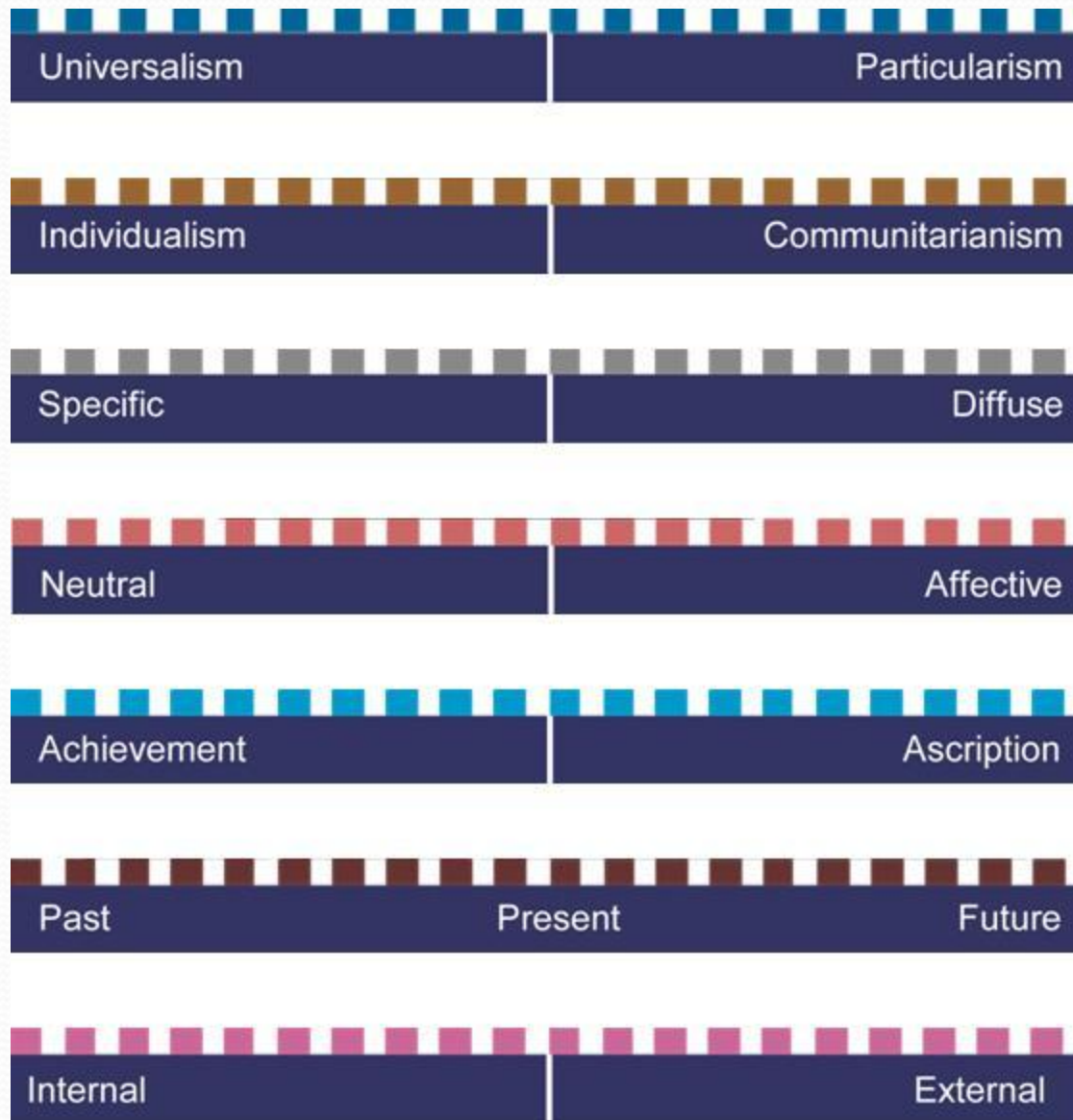Rhythm & Pace

Architecture

Behaviour

Dress

Literature

A model of culture

F. Trompenaars & Ch. Hampden-Turner:

- Culture is the way in which a group of people solves problems and reconciles dilemmas.

Universalism — Particularism

Individualism — Communitarianism

Specific — Diffuse

Neutral — Affective

Achievement — Ascription

Past — Present — Future

Internal — External

You are riding in a car driven by a close friend. He hits a pedestrian. You know he was going at least thirty-five miles per hour. There are no witnesses other than you. His lawyer says that if you testify under oath that he was driving only twenty miles per hour, you will save him from serious consequences.

What right has your friend to expect you to protect him?

A. My friend has a *definite* right as a friend to expect me to testify to the lower speed.

B. He has *some* right as a friend to expect me to testify to the lower speed.

C. He has *no* right as a friend to expect me to testify to the lower speed.

The dimension universalism-particularism concerns the standards by which relationships are measured. Universalist societies tend to feel that general rules and obligations are a strong source of moral reference.

Universalist societies are inclined to follow the rules - even when friends are involved - and look for "the one best way" of dealing equally and fairly with all cases. They assume that their standards are the right standards, and they attempt to change the attitudes of others to match theirs.

Particularist societies are those in which particular circumstances are more important than rules. Bonds of particular relationships (family, friends) are stronger than any abstract rules. Response to a situation may change according to the circumstances and the people involved. Particularists often argue that "it all depends".

1. RULES AND RELATIONSHIP

Consistency | Universalism | Particularism | Flexibility

Friend has no/some right and would not help

01/ Universalism
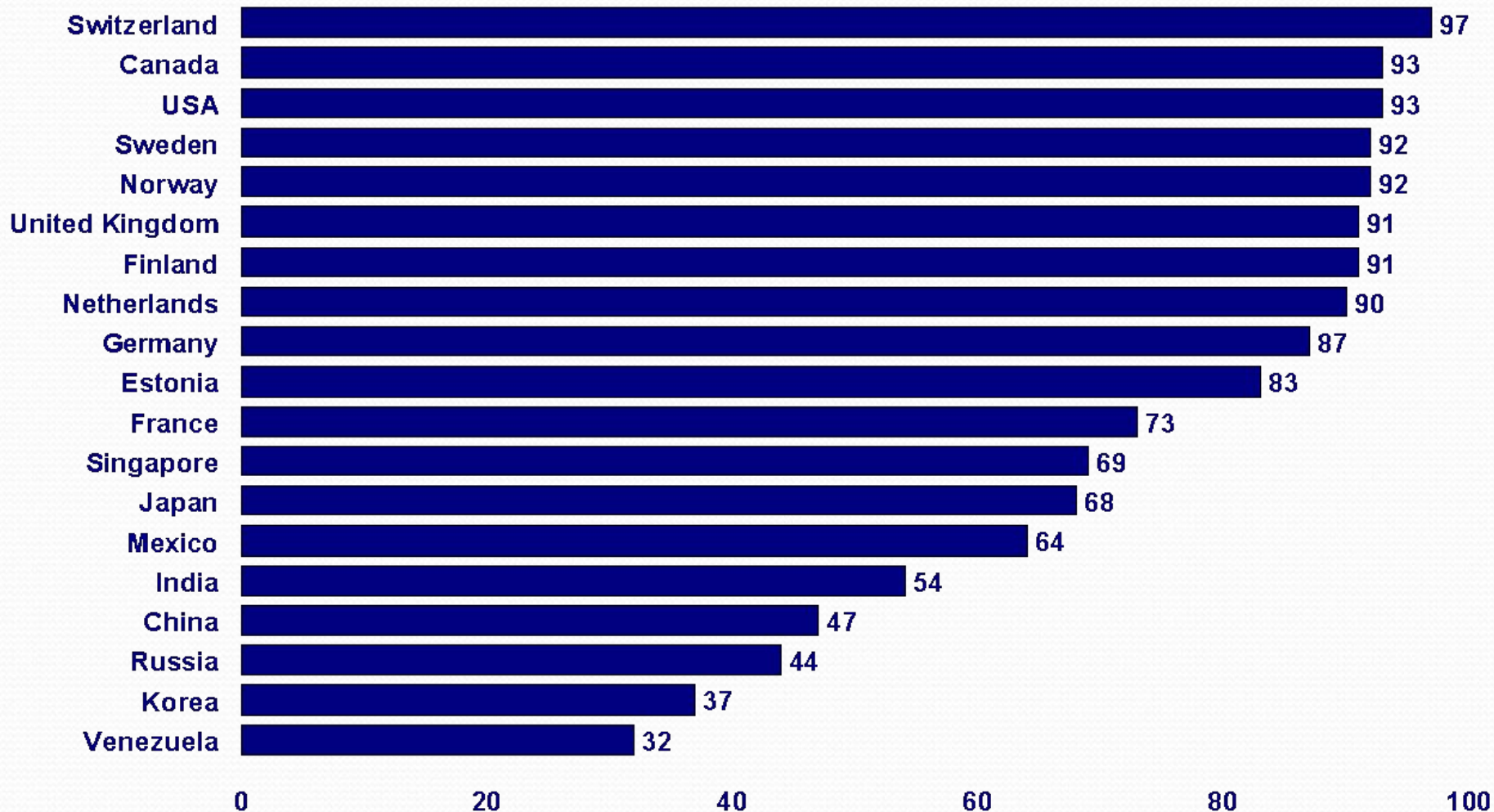
Universalists	Particularists
1. Focus more on rules than relationships	1. Focus more on relationships than rules
2. Legal contracts are readily drawn up	2. Legal contracts are readily modified
3. A trustworthy person is the one who honours their word or contract	3. A trustworthy person is the one who honours changing mutualities
4. There is only one truth or reality, that which has been agreed to	4. There are several perspectives on reality relative to each participant
5. A deal is a deal	5. Relationships evolve

a) One said: 'It is obvious that if one has as much freedom as possible and the maximum opportunity to develop oneself, the quality of one's life would improve as a result.'

b) Another said: 'If the individual is continuously taking care of his or her fellows then the quality of life for us all will improve, even if it obstructs individual freedom and individual development.'
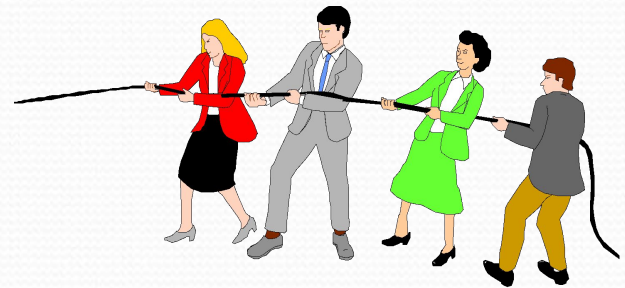
What of the two ways of reasoning do you think usually best, A or B?

The dimension individualism versus communitarianism is about the conflict between an individual's desire and the interests of the group he belongs to.

In a predominantly **individualistic culture**, people are expected to make their own decisions and to only take care of themselves and their immediate family. Decisions are often made on the spot, without consultation, and deadlocks may be resolved by voting.
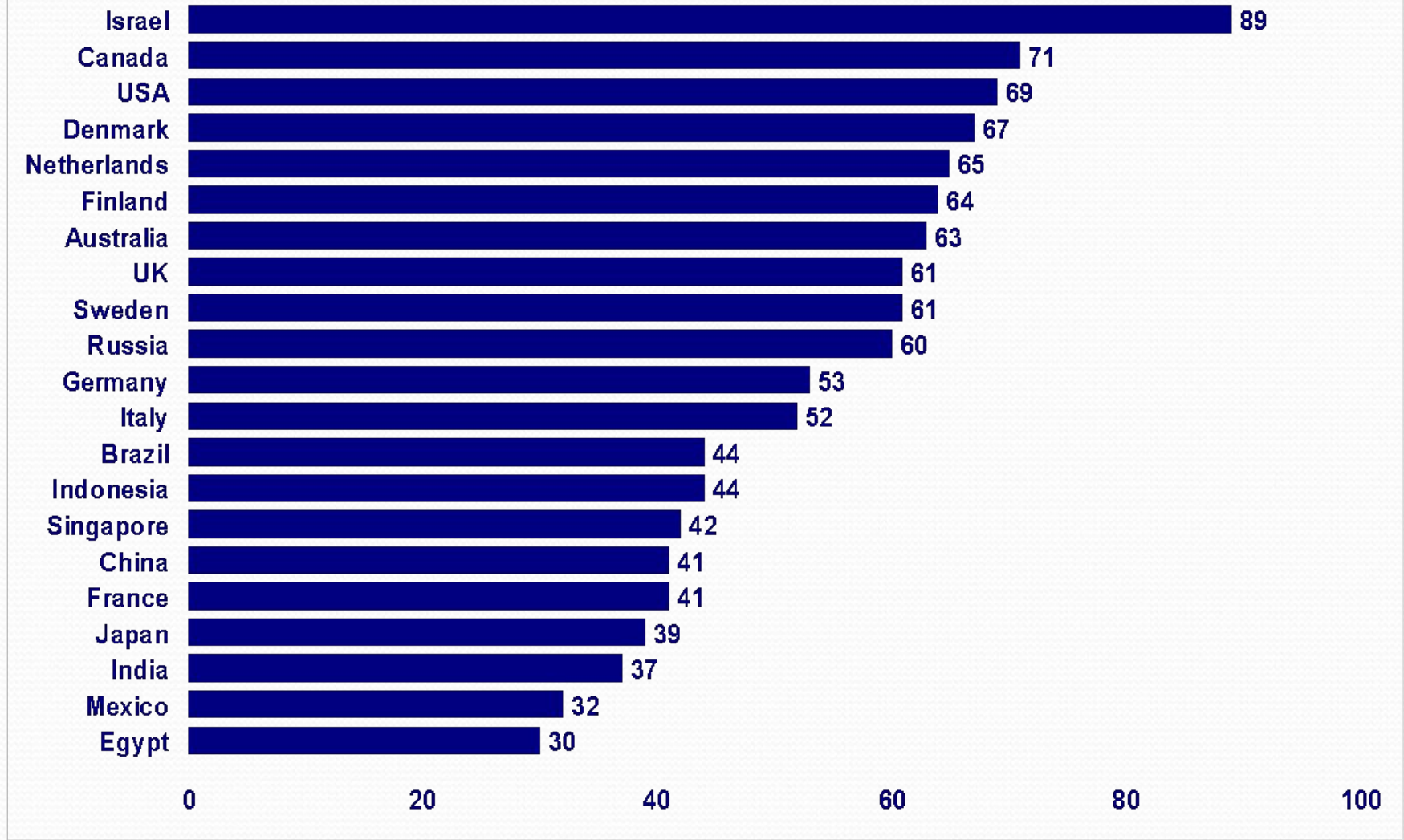
In contrast to this, members of a predominantly **communitarian society** are firmly integrated into groups which provide help and protection in exchange for a strong sense of loyalty. In such cases, people believe that an individual's quality of life improves when he takes care of his or her fellow man. The group comes before the individual, and people are mainly oriented towards common goals and objectives.

Negotiation is often carried out by teams, who may withdraw in order to consult with reference groups. Discussion is used to reach consensus.

2. GLOBAL TEAMWORK

Individual/Creativity | Individualism | Communitarianism | Group/Teamwork

Percentage opting for individual freedom
02/ Individualism

Country	Percentage
Israel	89
Canada	71
USA	69
Denmark	67
Netherlands	65
Finland	64
Australia	63
UK	61
Sweden	61
Russia	60
Germany	53
Italy	52
Brazil	44
Indonesia	44
Singapore	42
China	41
France	41
Japan	39
India	37
Mexico	32
Egypt	30

When managing and being managed

Individualism	Communitarianism
1. Expect job turnover and mobility to be high	1. Have low job turnover and mobility
2. Give people the freedom to take individual initiatives	2. Hold up superordinate goals for all to meet
3. Seek out high performers, heroes and champions for special praise.	3. Extol the whole group and avoid showing favouritism.

In my society, it is considered unprofessional to express emotions overtly.

Please select your position on the statement below:

A.   Strongly agree

B. Agree

C. Undecided

D. Disagree

E. Strongly disagree

3. Neutral – Affective

This dimension focuses on the degree to which people express emotions, and the interplay between reason and emotion in human relationships. Every culture has strong norms about how readily emotions should be revealed.

In cultures **high on affectivity**, people freely express their emotions: they attempt to find immediate outlets for their feelings.

In emotionally neutral cultures, one carefully controls emotions and it is reluctant to show feelings. *Reason* dominates one's *interaction* with others.

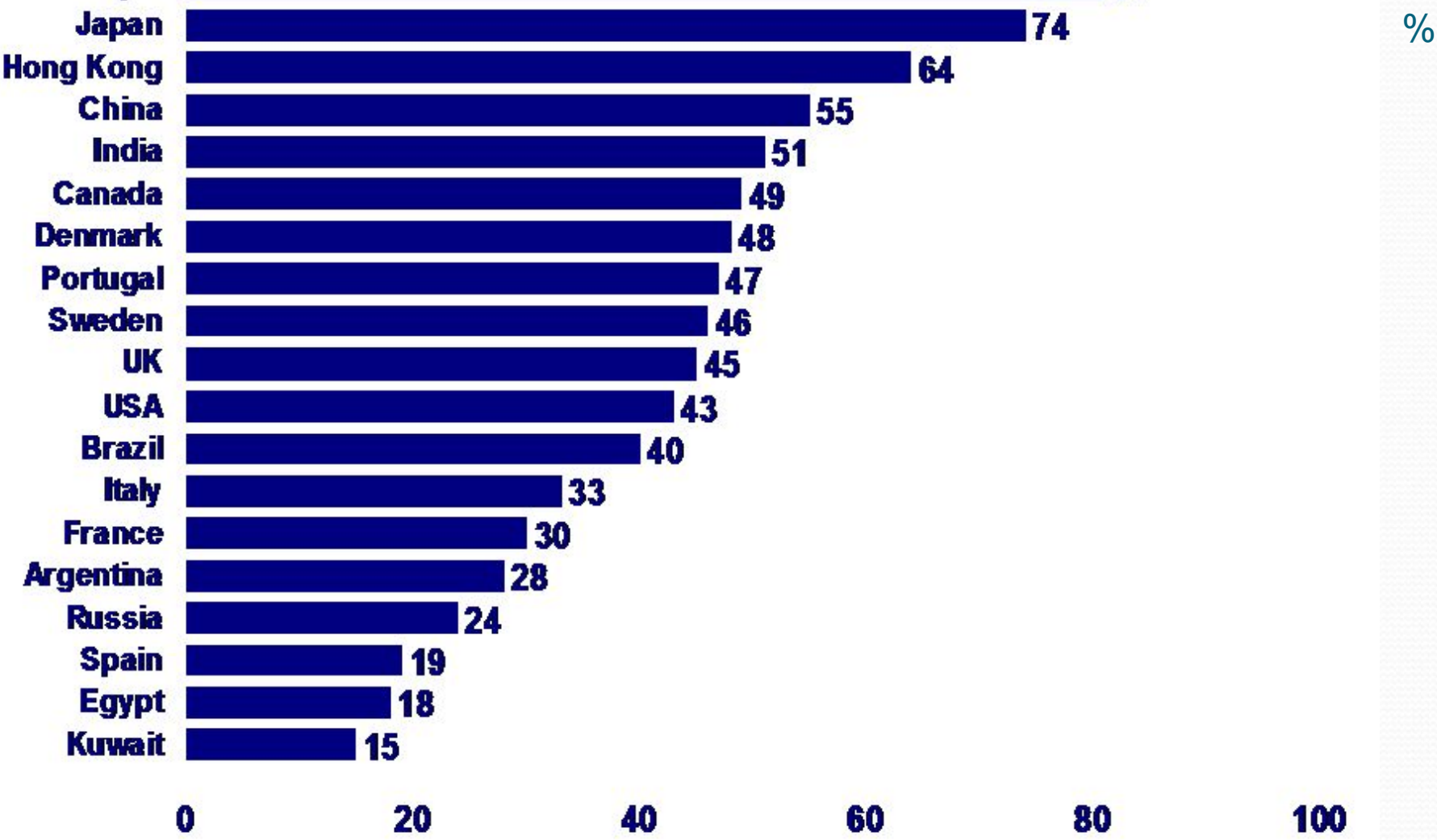**In a neutrally oriented culture**, people are taught that it is incorrect to overtly show feelings.

In an affectively oriented culture, it is accepted to show one's feelings.

| Control | Neutral | | Affective | Passion |

Percentage not expressing emotions overtly

03/ Neutral versus Affective

Country	%
Japan	74
Hong Kong	64
China	55
India	51
Canada	49
Denmark	48
Portugal	47
Sweden	46
UK	45
USA	43
Brazil	40
Italy	33
France	30
Argentina	28
Russia	24
Spain	19
Egypt	18
Kuwait	15

Recognizing the differences

Neutral	Affective
1. Do not reveal what are thinking or feeling.	1. Reveal thoughts and feelings verbally and non-verbally.
2. May (accidentally) reveal tension in face and posture.	2.Transparency and expressiveness release tensions.
3. Physical contact, gesturing or strong facial expressions often taboo	3. Touching, gesturing and strong facial expressions common
4. Statments often read out in monotone	4. Statements declained fluently and dramatically.

When managing and being managed

Neutral	Affective
1. Avoid warm, expressive or enthusiastic behaviours. These are interpreted as lack of control over your feelings and inconsistent with high status.	1. Avoid detached, ambigous and cool demeanour. This will be interpreted as negative evaluation, as disdain, dislike, and social distance. You are excluding them from "the family".
2. Look for small cues that the person is pleased or angry and amplify their importance.	2. Tolerate great "surfeits" of emotionality without getting intimidated or coerced and moderate their importance.

4. Specific – Diffuse

Generally, **people from specifically oriented cultures** begin by looking at each element of a situation. They analyze the elements separately, then put them back together again - viewing the whole is the sum of its parts. Specifically oriented individuals concentrate on hard facts.

People from diffusely oriented cultures see each element in the perspective of the complete picture. All elements are related to each other. The elements are synthesized into a whole which is more than simply the sum of its parts.

| Specific/Analytical Low context | Specific | | Diffuse | Diffuse/Synthesis High context |

A boss asking to paint his house

a) The colleague argues:

You don't have to paint the house if you don't feel like it. He is your boss in the company. Outside the company, he has little authority

b) The subordinate argues:

Despite the fact that I don't feel like it, I will paint the house anyway. He is my boss and you cannot ignore it outside your work either.
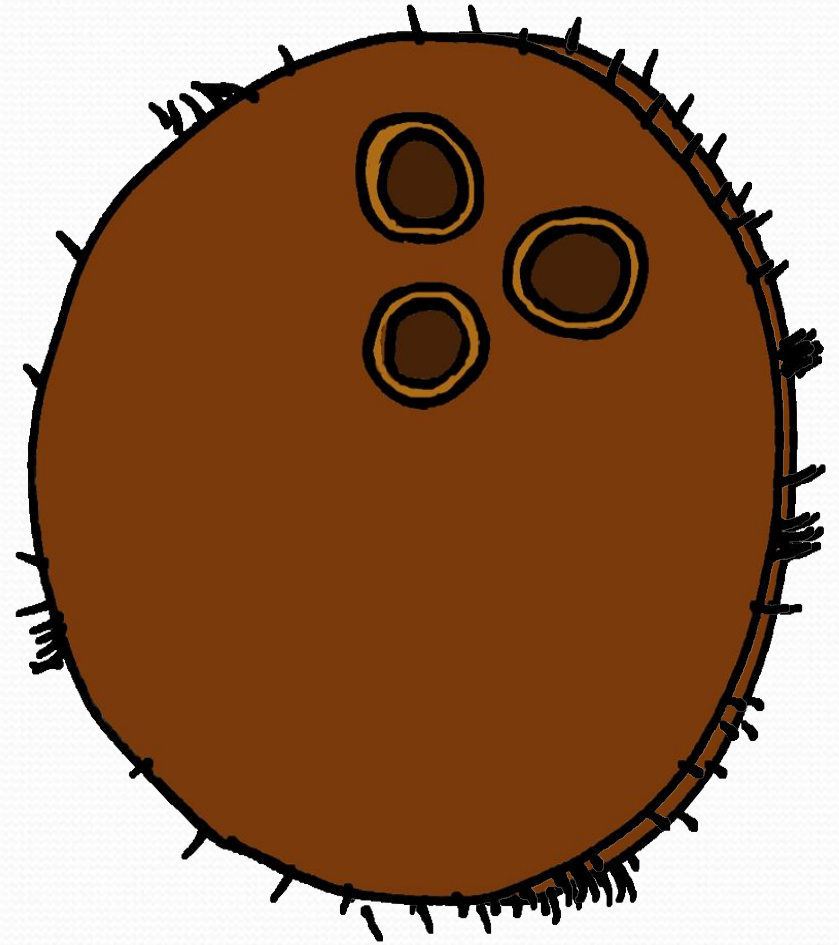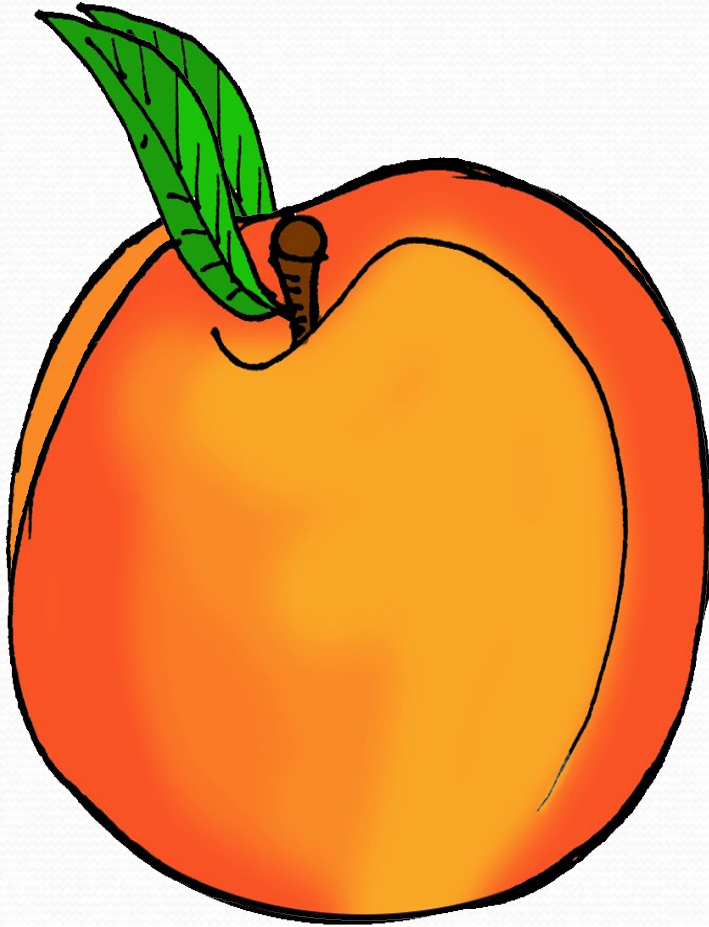
4. Specific – Diffuse

This dimension also concerns our degree of involvement in relationships.

Specifically oriented individuals engage others in specific areas of life, affecting single levels of personality. In specifically oriented cultures, a manager separates the task relationship with a subordinate from the private sphere.

Diffusely oriented individuals engage others diffusely in multiple areas of life, affecting several levels of personality at the same time. In diffusely oriented countries, every life space and every level of personality tends to be interwoven.
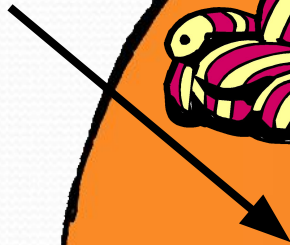
| Specific/Analytical Low context | Specific | | Diffuse | Diffuse/Synthesis High context |

04/ Specific versus Diffuse

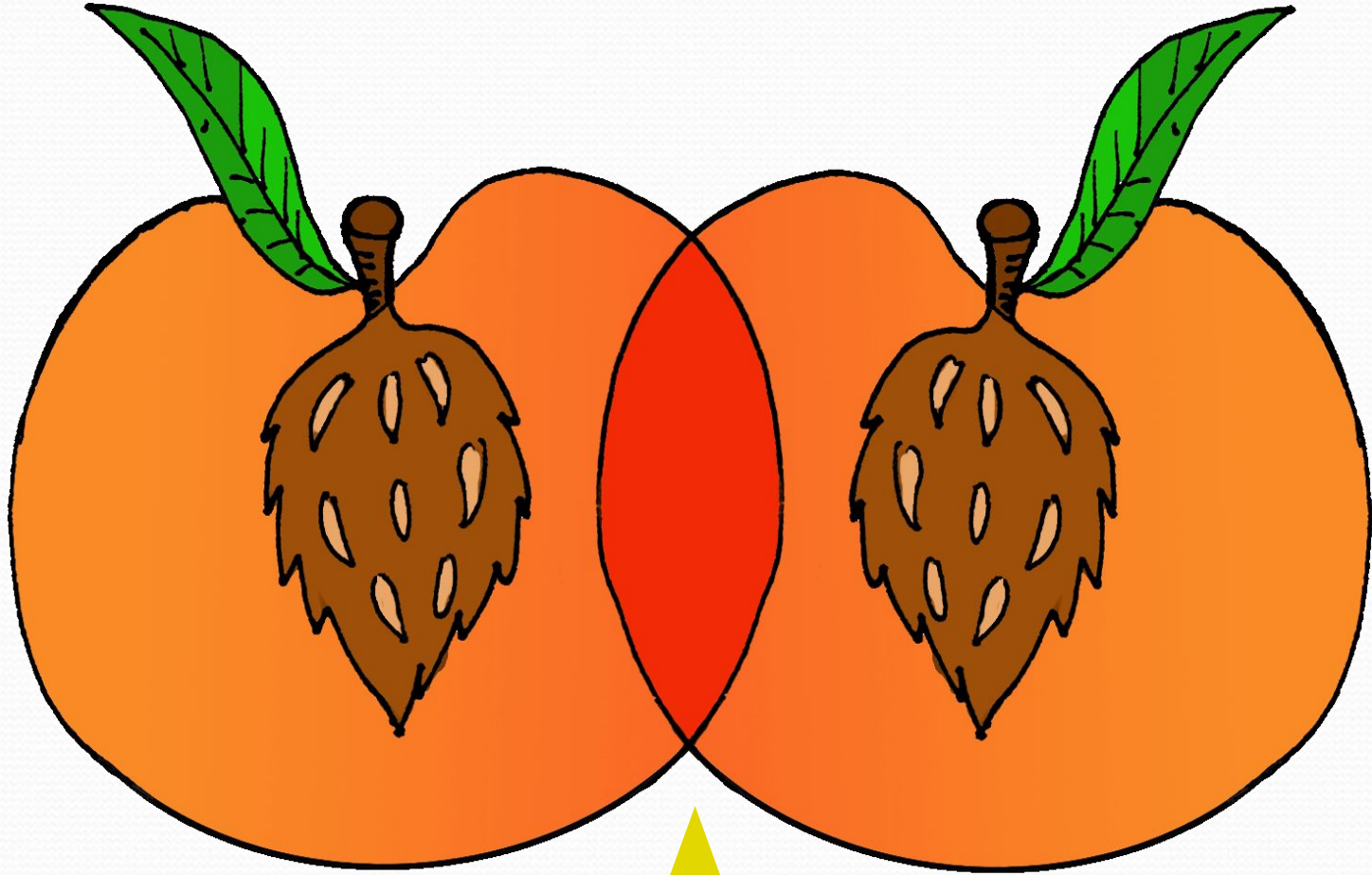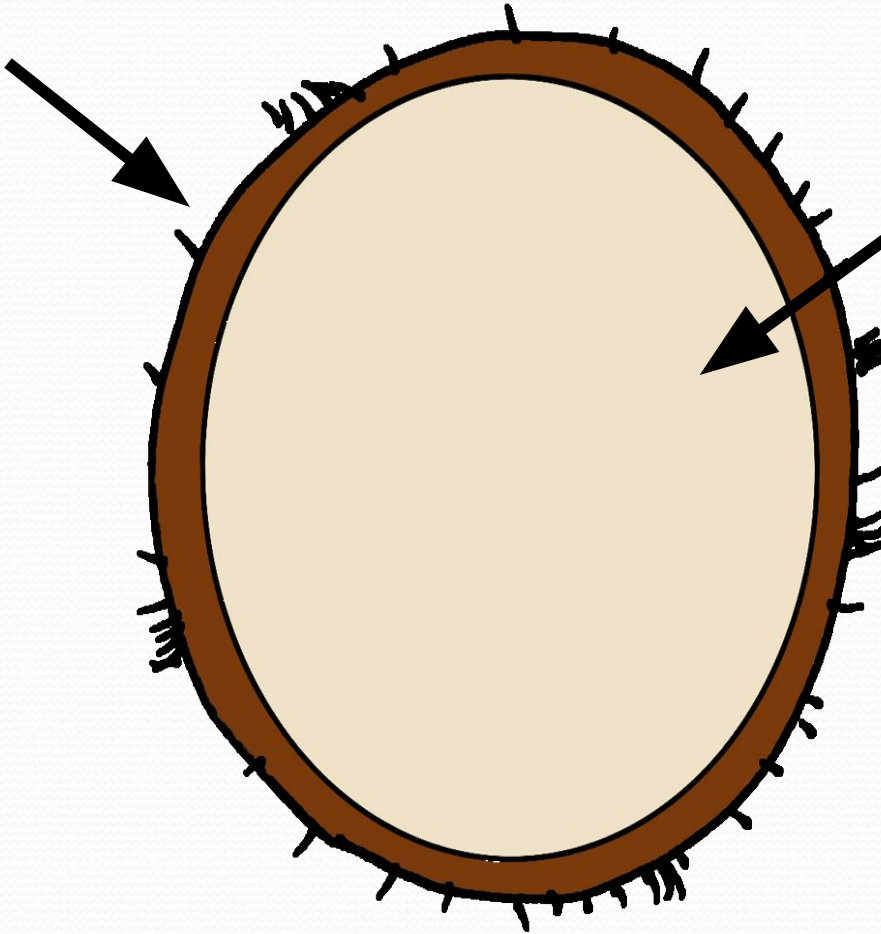# Specific versus Diffuse
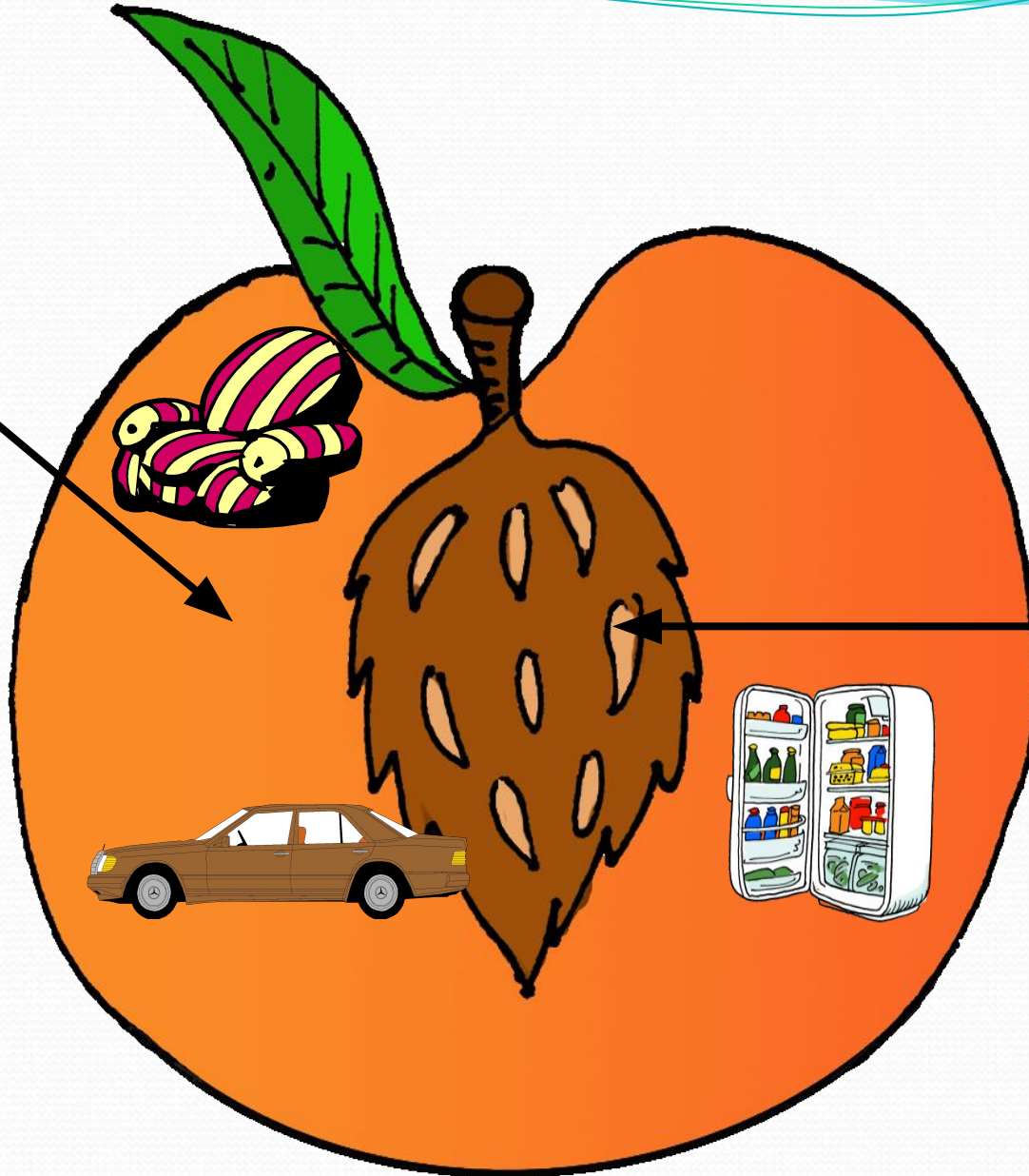
PUBLIC

PRIVATE

Specific versus Diffuse

Specific Relationship

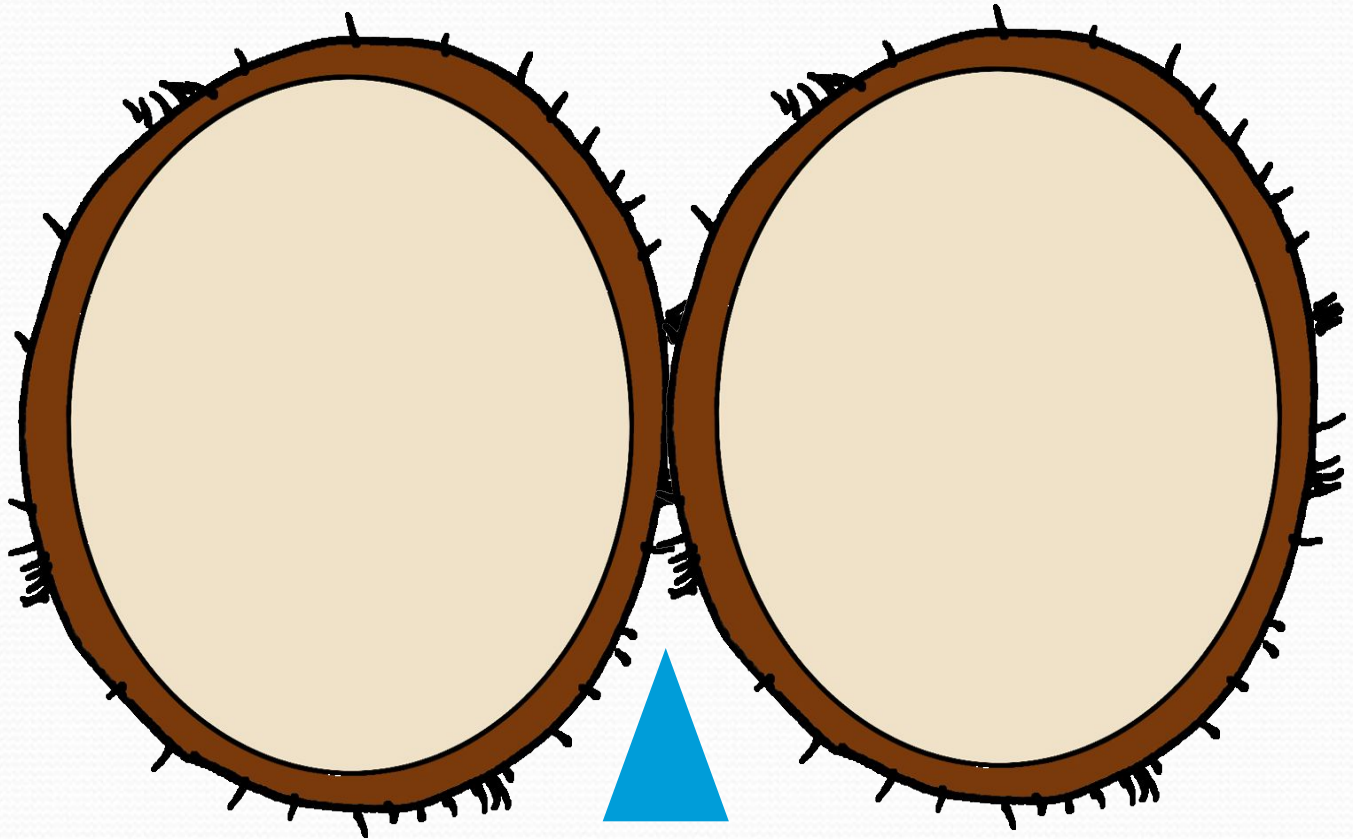# Specific versus Diffuse

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

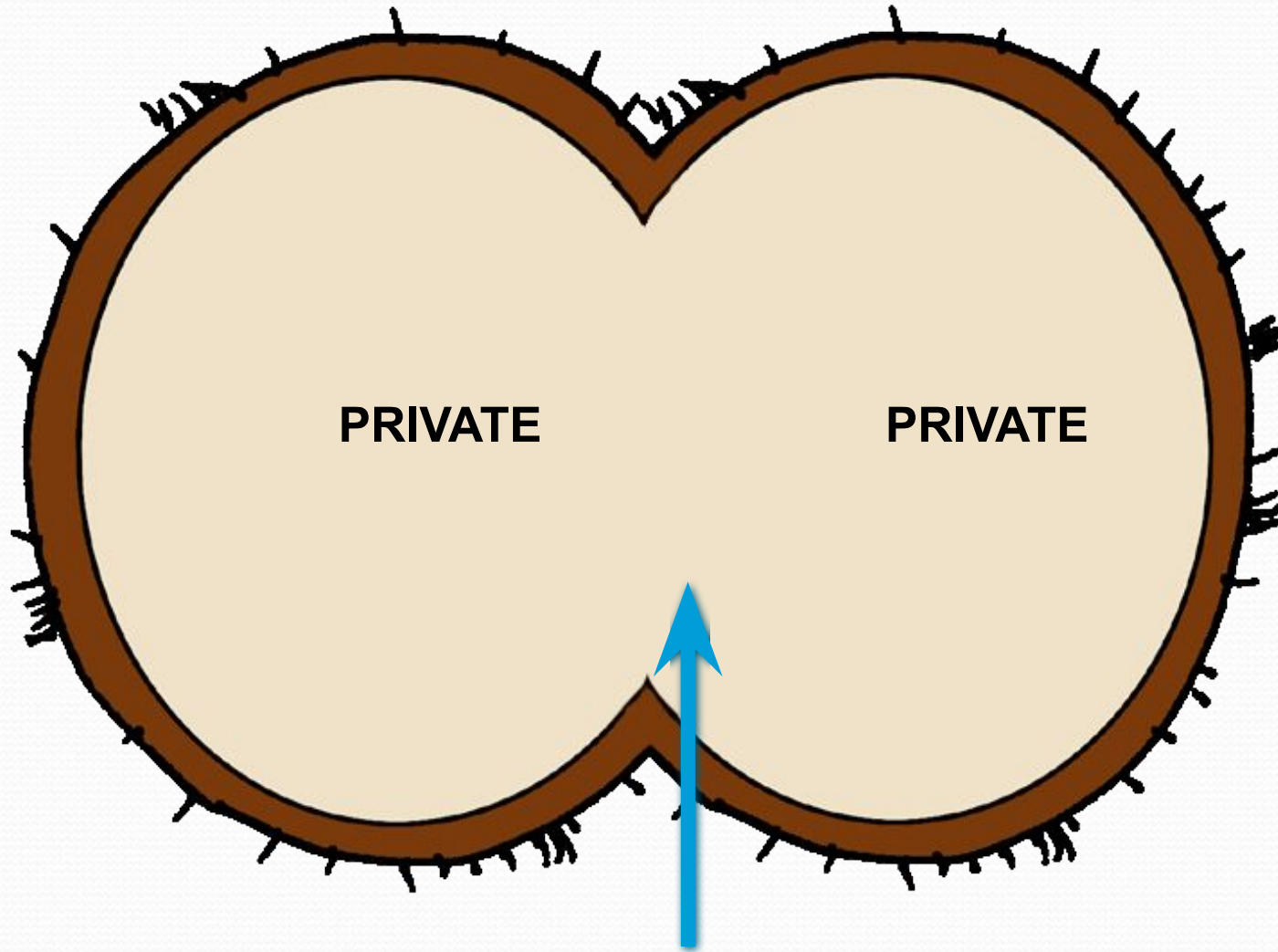# Specific versus Diffuse

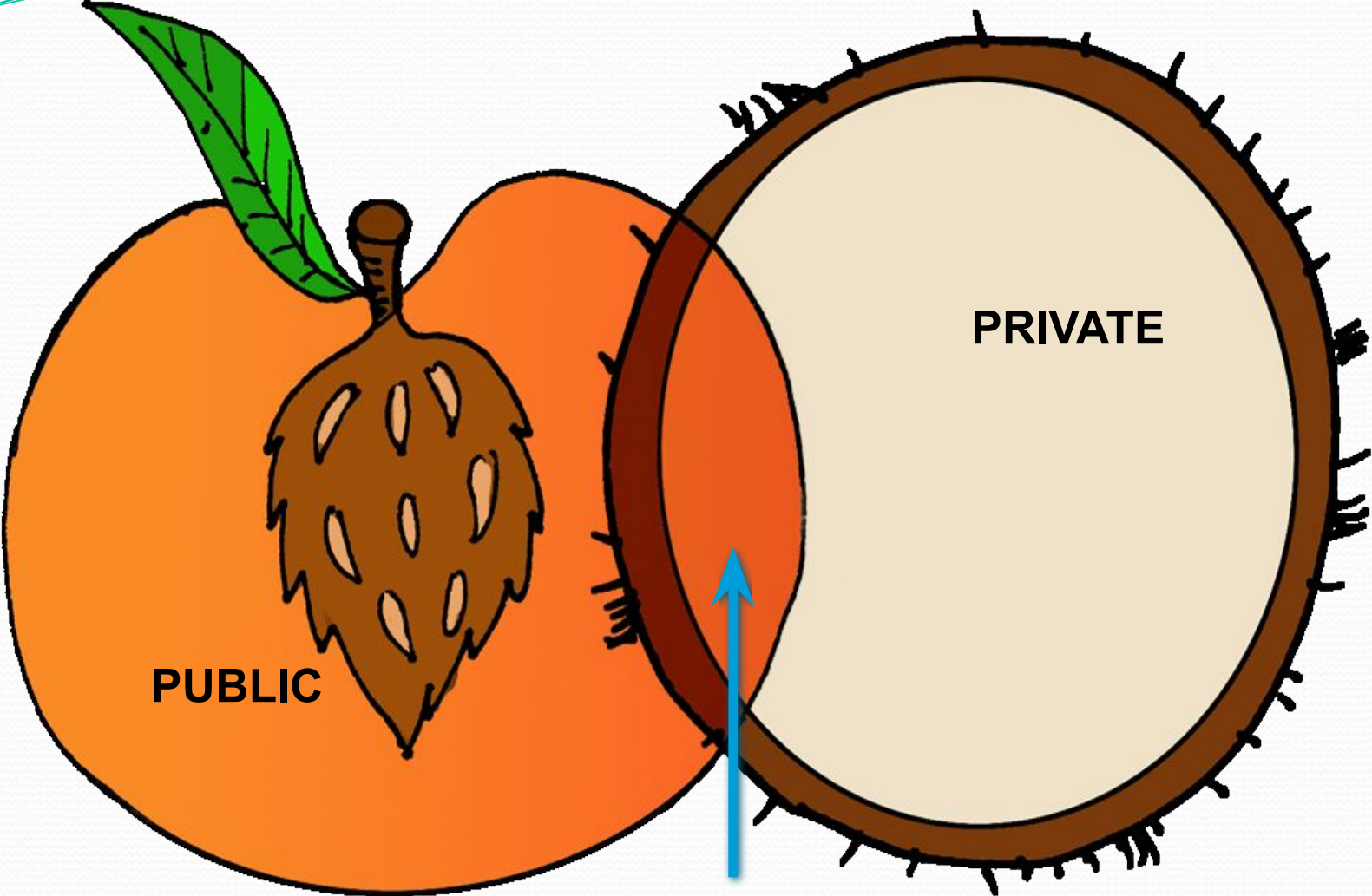No Relationship

Specific versus Diffuse
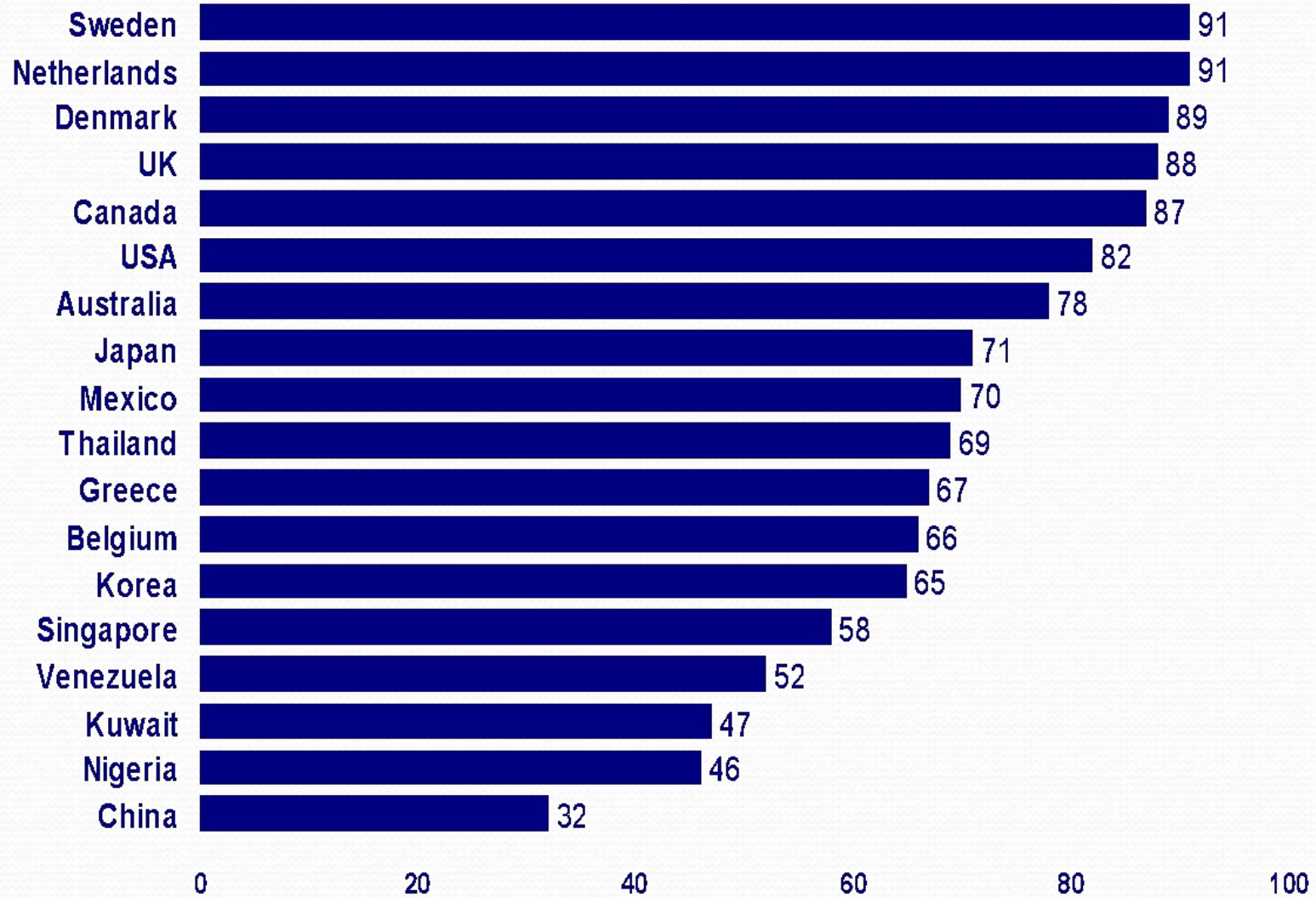

PRIVATE   **PRIVATE**

Diffuse Relationship

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

Danger Zone

Would not paint the house

04/ Specificity

When managing and being managed

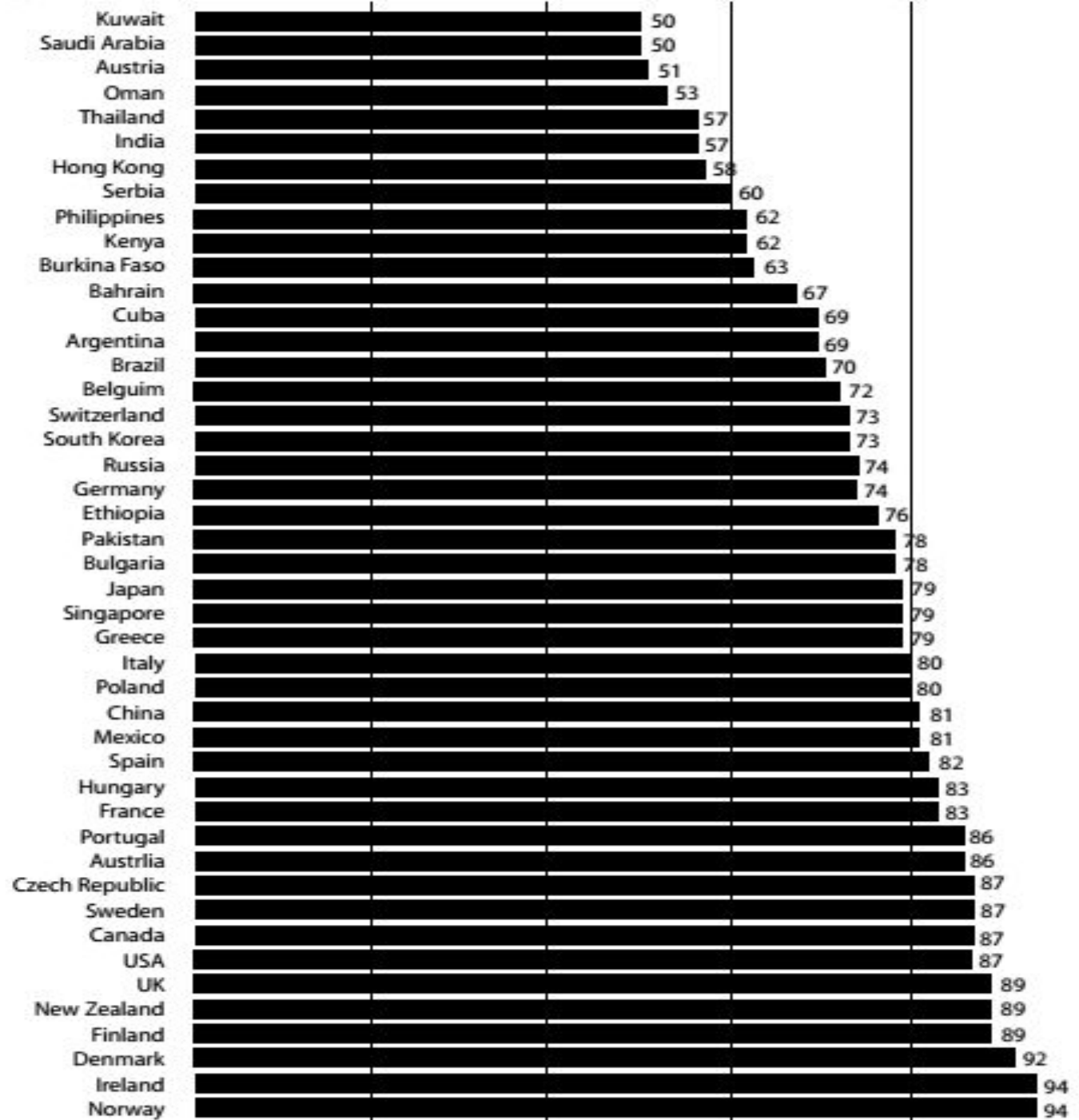| Specific-oriented (for diffuse individuals)	Diffuse-oriented (for specific individuals)
1. Structure the meeting with time intervals and agendas.	1. Let the meeting flow occasionally nudging its process.
2. Do not use titles or acknowledge skills that are irrelevant to the issue being discussed.	2. Respect a person's title, age, background connections, whatever issue is being discussed.
3. Private and business agendas are kept separate from each other	3. Private and business issues interpenetrate.

05/ Achievement versus Ascription

To measure the extent of achieving versus ascribing orientations in different cultures, we used the following statements, inviting participants to mark them on a five-point scale (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree).

A The most important thing in life is to think and act in the ways that best suit the way you really are, even if you do not get things done.

B The respect a person gets is highly dependent on their family background.
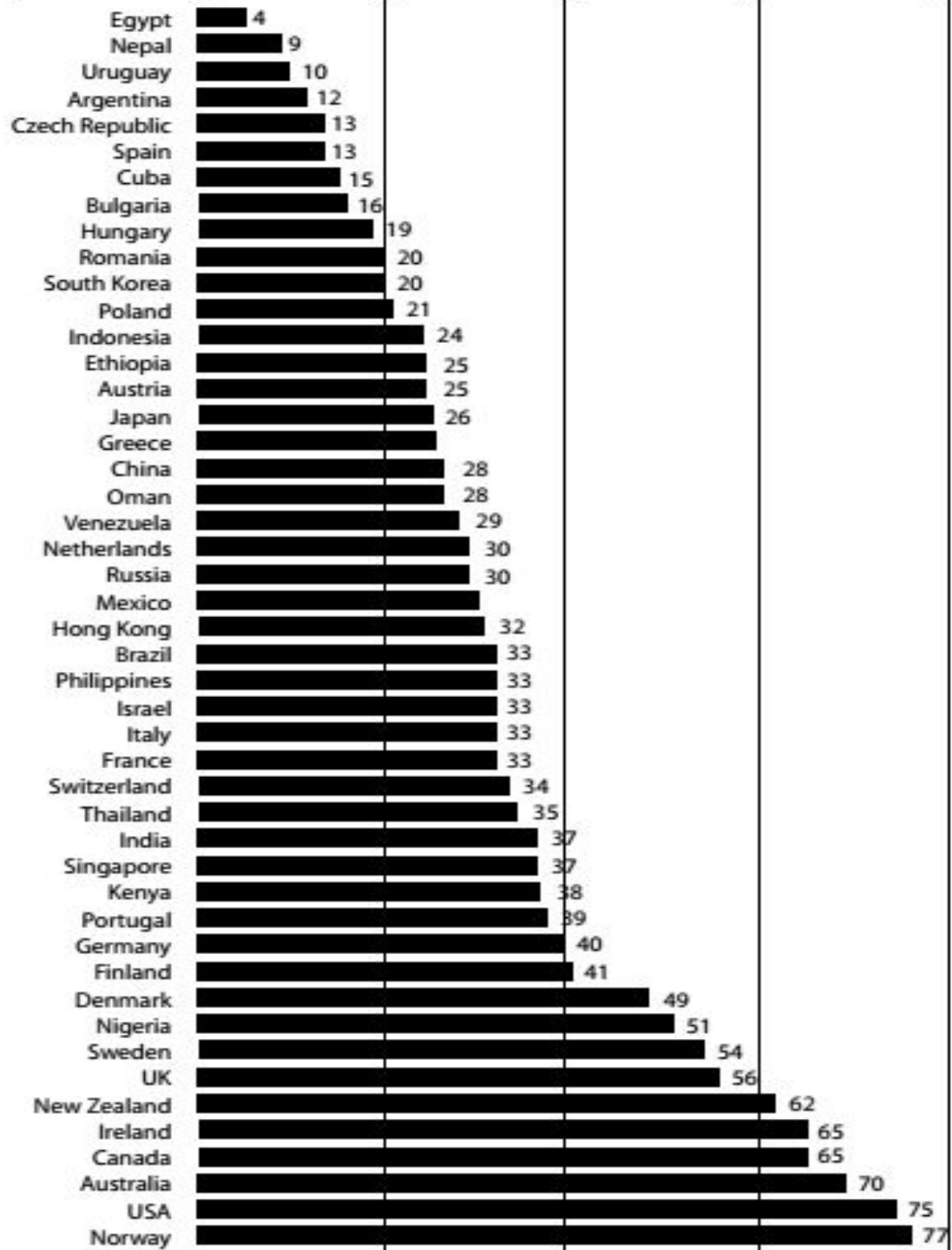
«Respect depends on family background»

(Percentage of respondents who disagree)

Country	Value
Kuwait	50
Saudi Arabia	50
Austria	51
Oman	53
Thailand	57
India	57
Hong Kong	58
Serbia	60
Philippines	62
Kenya	62
Burkina Faso	63
Bahrain	67
Cuba	69
Argentina	69
Brazil	70
Belguim	72
Switzerland	73
South Korea	73
Russia	74
Germany	74
Ethiopia	76
Pakistan	78
Bulgaria	78
Japan	79
Singapore	79
Greece	79
Italy	80
Poland	80
China	81
Mexico	81
Spain	82
Hungary	83
France	83
Portugal	86
Austrlia	86
Czech Republic	87
Sweden	87
Canada	87
USA	87
UK	89
New Zealand	89
Finland	89
Denmark	92
Ireland	94
Norway	94

«Acting as suits you even if nothing is achieved»

Percentage of respondents who disagree

Country	Value
Egypt	4
Nepal	9
Uruguay	10
Argentina	12
Czech Republic	13
Spain	13
Cuba	15
Bulgaria	16
Hungary	19
Romania	20
South Korea	20
Poland	21
Indonesia	24
Ethiopia	25
Austria	25
Japan	26
Greece	
China	28
Oman	28
Venezuela	29
Netherlands	30
Russia	30
Mexico	
Hong Kong	32
Brazil	33
Philippines	33
Israel	33
Italy	33
France	33
Switzerland	34
Thailand	35
India	37
Singapore	37
Kenya	38
Portugal	39
Germany	40
Finland	41
Denmark	49
Nigeria	51
Sweden	54
UK	56
New Zealand	62
Ireland	65
Canada	65
Australia	70
USA	75
Norway	77

What You Do

Who You Are

STATUS ?

Aspects of ascribed status…
05/ Achievement versus Ascription

- **Family**
- **Age**
- **Gender**
- **Education**

5. Achievement – Ascription

The dimension achievement-ascription focuses on how personal status is assigned.

While some societies accord status to people on the basis of their performance, others attribute it to them by virtue of age, class, gender, education, etcetera.

While achieved status refers to action and what you do, ascribed status refers to being and who you are.

5. STATUS

Egalitarian / Doing | Achievement | Ascription | Hierarchy / Being

When managing and being managed

Achievement-oriented (for ascriptivers)	Ascription-oriented (for achivers)
1. Use the title that reflects how competent you are as an individual	1. Use the title that reflects your degree of influence in your organisation.
2. Respect for manager is based on knowlege and skills.	2. Respect for manager is based on seniority.
3. Decisions are challenged on technical and functional grounds.	3. Decisions are only challenged by people with higher authority

6. Time Orientation

The time orientation dimension has two aspects: the relative importance cultures give to the **past, present, and future**, and **their approach to structuring time**.

If a culture is predominantly **oriented towards the past**, the future is often seen as a repetition of past experiences.

In a culture predominantly **oriented towards the present**, day-by-day experiences tend to direct people's lives.

In a **future-oriented culture**, most human activities are directed toward future prospects. In this case, the past is not considered to be vitally significant to the future.

6. Time Orientation

Sequentialism and **synchronism** form the different approaches to structuring time.

People who structure time **sequentially** view time as a series of passing events.

They tend to do one thing at a time, and prefer planning and keeping to plans once they have been made.

People structuring time **synchronically** view past, present, and future as being interrelated. They usually do several things at once. Time commitments are desirable but are not absolute and plans are easily changed.
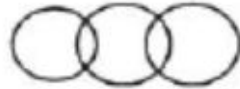

6. TIME

Sequential   Past   Present   Future   Synchronic

Time as Structure

Sequential Time	Synchronic Time
Linear	Cyclical
segmented	simultaneous events
serial	parallel
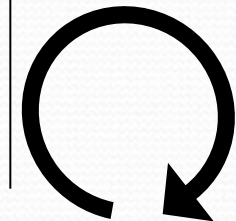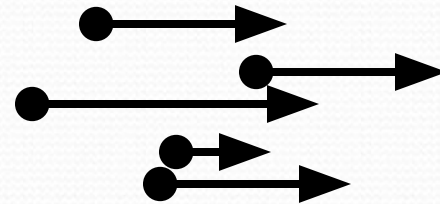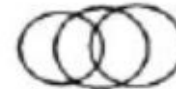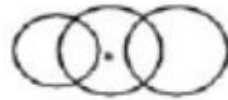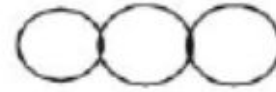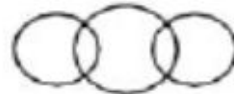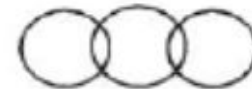
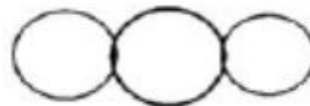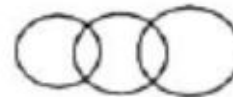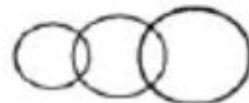Belgium, Canada, China, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Russia, Sweden, UK, USA, Venezuela

07/ Internal versus External Control

A It is worthwhile trying to control important natural forces, like the weather.

B Nature should take its course and we just have to accept it the way it comes and do the best we can
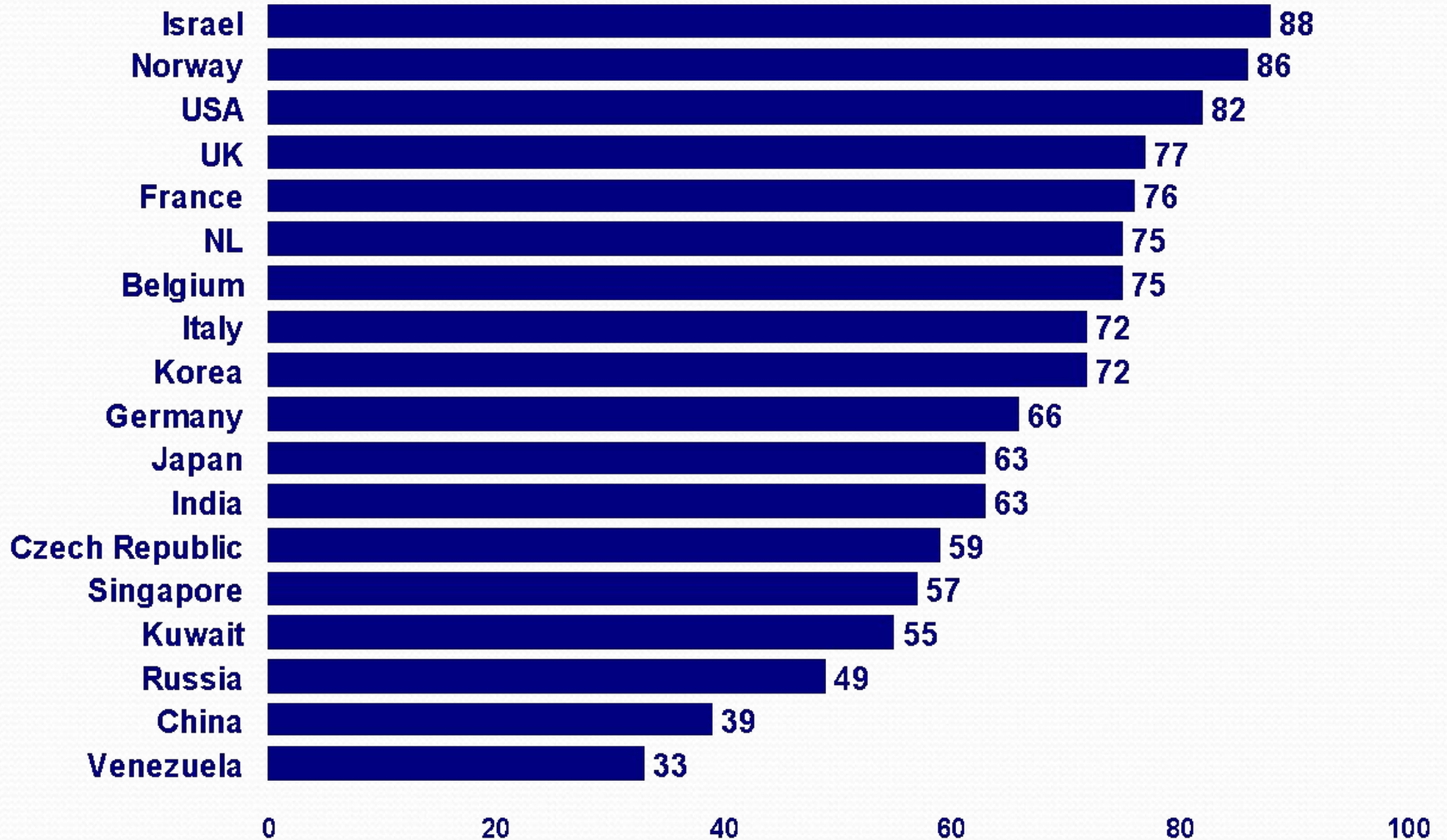
07/ Internal versus External Control

A. What happens to me is my own doing.

B. Sometimes I feel that I do not have enough control over the direction my life is taking.

What happens to me is my own doing
07/ Internal versus External Control

7. Internal – External

The internal versus external control dimension concerns the meaning people assign to their environment. People who have an internally controlled mechanistic view of nature - a belief that one can dominate nature – usually view themselves as the point of departure for determining the right action.

In contrast to this, cultures with an externally controlled (or organic) view of nature -which assumes that man is controlled by nature - orient their actions towards others. They focus on the environment rather than on themselves.

7. STRATEGY AND PLANNING

Push Internal   External Pull

When managing and being managed

Internally controlled	Externally controlled
1. Make sure that tangible goals are clearely linked to the tangible rewards	1. Try to reinforce the current directions and facilitate the work of employees
2. Discuss disagreements and conflicts openly; these show that everyone is determined	2Give people time and opportunities to work quietly through conflicts; these are distressing
3. Get agreement on and ownership of clear objectives.	3. Achieve congruence among various people's goals.