



THE MODEL OF FREEDOM[®]

The Model of Freedom is constructed out of four dimensions, which are not mutually exclusive but complementary. Individuality and community together form our cultural identity; how we choose to harmonise our individual rights with our duties towards our community.

The top half is about what we do and how authorities limit our behaviour. Some cultures prefer ascribed authority; a type of authority based on who the leader is, a leader who cannot be challenged and keeps final responsibility. Other cultures prefer achieved authority; a type of authority based on what the leader does, a leader who is challenging and delegating responsibilities.

The bottom half is about our inner world, what we feel and think, and how this is limiting our behaviour based on (rule) systems. Some cultures prefer simple systems; cultures where a rule is a rule and people tend to stick to these rules. Other cultures prefer complex systems; cultures where a rule is a guideline and exceptions are needed to fit the specific context.

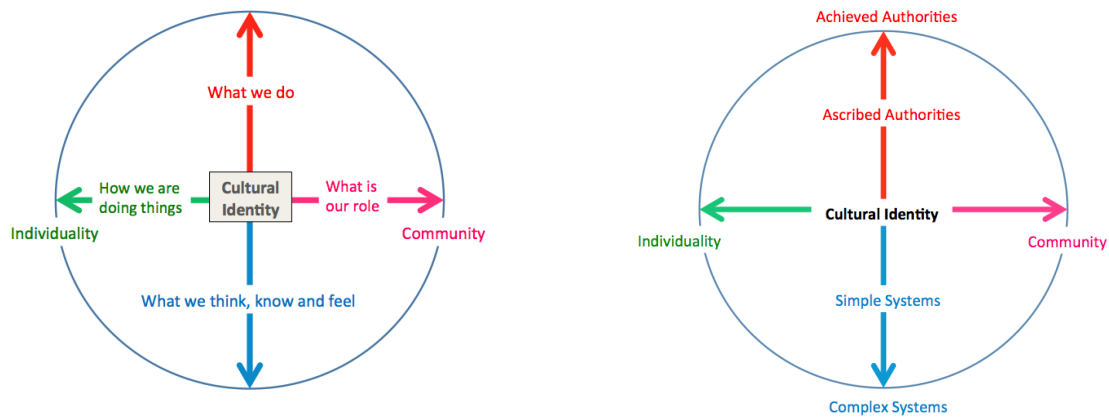
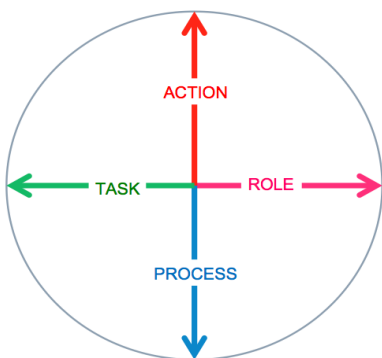


Figure 1: The four dimensions of the Model of Freedom

Every culture will recognise themselves in these dimensions up to a certain point. Where cultures differ, is in how much of each dimension they prefer in order to feel free and secure. Every culture poses limitations to behaviour, yet we feel free within the limitations set by our culture; our comfort zone. It is when we encounter different cultures that we start to realise we were limited in the first place.

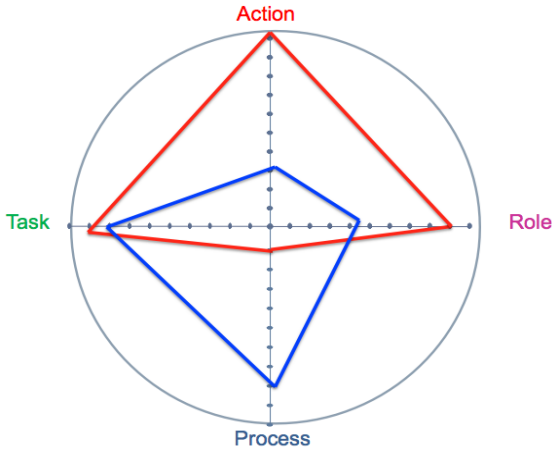


Based on the different scores on every orientation, the Model of Freedom allows users - individuals, teams, organisations - to draw their profiles. These profiles tend to have a clear majority of their surface on the top, bottom, left or right side of the circle. This is a cultural preferred starting point and we call these orientations. An orientation is nothing more than a preferred place to start when interacting with other people.

Figure 2: The four orientations of the Model of Freedom



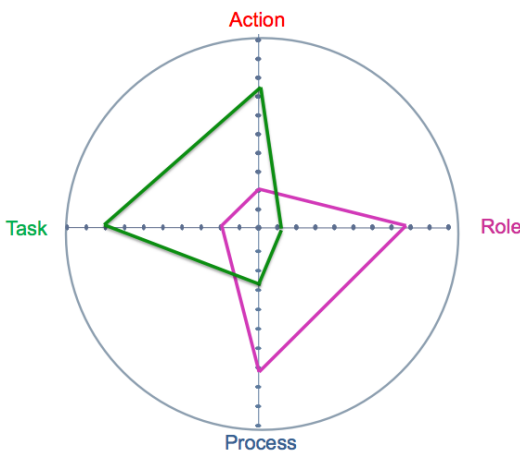
Action oriented cultures prefer simple systems and achieved authority; their starting point is the concrete, the visible and tangible, they like to `just do it`. We find these business cultures in the Anglo Saxon parts of the world. An example is the red profile in Figure 3.



Process oriented cultures prefer complex systems and ascribed authority; their starting point is the abstract, the background and details, they like to think and debate. We find these business cultures in Latin cultures and in Central and Eastern Europe. An example is the blue profile in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Action and process-oriented profiles

Task oriented cultures focus on their individual rights more than on their duties toward a community (or team). They cooperate on a task but prefer to work alone. They strongly believe in equality and transparency. Task related conflicts are perceived as part of life. We find these business cultures in Northern parts of Europe. An example is the green profile in Figure 4.



Role oriented cultures focus on their duties towards the community more than on their individual rights. They share responsibility with their group members. Status differences are important and respected. Conflicts of any kind are a threat to group harmony and should thus be avoided. We find these business cultures in most of Asia, Africa and in the Middle East. An example is the pink profile in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Task and role-oriented profiles

Conclusion:

The Model of Freedom[®] is a culture model which enables us to draw profiles of organisational and national cultures in 53 countries. These profiles visualize why people act, perceive and interpret as they do.

By comparing different profiles we learn about similarities and differences in preferred management, leadership and working styles.