

**Technology Policy Negotiations and  
Dispute Resolution  
ESD.933 – Session 7**

**Cross-Cultural  
Negotiations**

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# Cross-Cultural Negotiations

- Why study negotiations in a cross-cultural context?
- Limitations of stereo-type training
- A two-fold approach in this session
  - Insights for increasing your effectiveness in cross-cultural negotiations
  - Implications for leadership

# Analysis of Alternative Assumptions

- **Process:**

- Six groups of about 3-4 people each
- Two highly simplified sets of assumptions are listed on the next page -- reflecting two hypothetical cultures
- Three groups operate as a cluster under one set of assumptions and three as a cluster under the other
- One group from each cluster will be assigned each of the following:
  - How to prepare for and open negotiations in your culture?
  - How to manage internal differences during negotiations in your culture?
  - How to conclude negotiations and live under/with agreements in your culture?
- You will be given a blank transparency to draw a picture or otherwise convey what your phase of negotiations would be like with other organizations in your culture -- given these assumptions

# Analysis of Alternative Assumptions

## *Assumptions in culture A:*

- The most important outcomes of a negotiations are its long-term implications**
- The primary goal of a negotiator is to build and maintain an enduring relationship**
- Consensus within the other side is as important as consensus within your side**
- Fairness should be judged on a case-by-case basis, taking in account special circumstances**
- Conflicts are problems to be solved**
- Cooperation is essential to optimize the whole**

## *Assumptions in culture B:*

- The most important outcomes of a negotiations are the specific agreements reached**
- The primary goal of a negotiator is to effectively represent constituents/clients**
- Consensus within your side is critical, divisions within the other side can be advantageous**
- Fairness should be judged based on clear and consistent standards**
- Conflicts are contests to be won**
- Competition is essential to drive excellence**

# Analysis of Alternative Assumptions

- How do these assumptions govern negotiations among people within the same culture?
- What might happen if people from the two different cultures were to bargain with each other?
- These are highly stylized sets of assumptions -- how do they line up with assumptions about negotiations in cultures with which you are familiar?
- What experiences have you with with contrasting cultural assumptions about negotiations?
- What have we learned during this exercise?

# Rules from Salacuse

1. Learn the other side's culture
2. Don't stereotype
3. Find ways to bridge the culture gap
  1. Bridge the gap using the other side's culture
  2. Bridge the gap using your own culture
  3. Bridge the gap with a combination of both cultures
  4. Bridge the gap with a third culture

# Selected Lessons About Cross-Cultural Negotiations

- Anticipate divergent assumptions about time horizons, relationships, substantive agreements, internal consensus, conflict and cooperation
- Approach negotiations with an empathic, learning stance
- Assess when to adopt local practices (such as norms about time) and when to maintain your style/approach (such as levels of disclosure) -- and communicate these choices
- Attend to the logistics of translation and interpretation
- Assume there will be misunderstandings -- be humble about what you know or be humbled by what you don't know