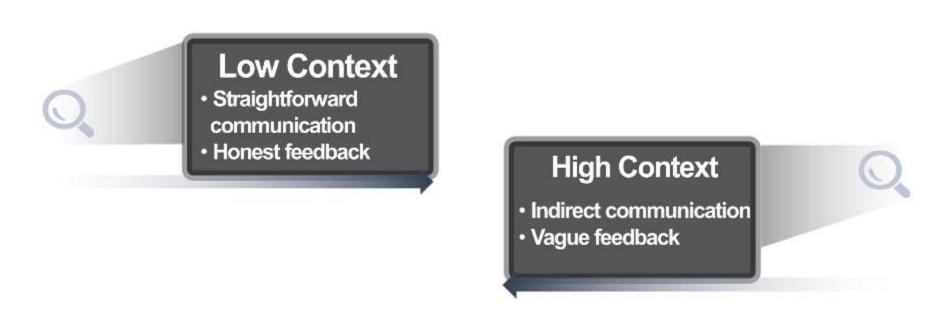
Understanding 'High Context' and 'Low Context'





Understanding 'High Context' and 'Low Context'

Straightforward

#### **Low Context**

- Individuals have the right to express their personal opinions
- Conflict in opinions is an excellent method to induce discussion and bring out diversity in thought

### **High Context**

- Silence is also an expression of opinion
- Keep up appearances by showing respect to your superior, 'rank mentality'
- Stresses harmony in the group you belong to

Indirect

Understanding 'High Context' and 'Low Context' - EXAMPLES

#### Debate Culture

Understanding others during conversation

### **Low Context**

When debating, we express our opinions freely and critique the opinions of others.

Rather than considering the atmosphere or intent of the speaker, we take what the speaker said literally.

## **High Context**

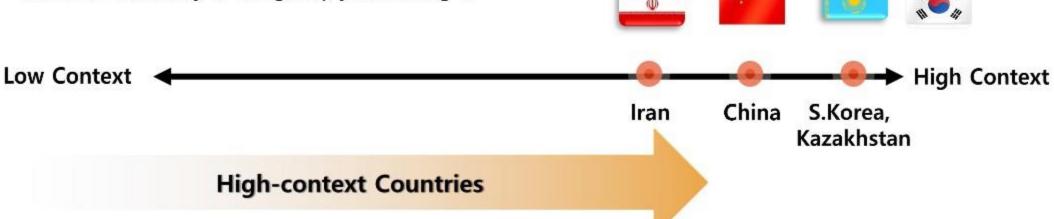
We are not accustomed to critiquing others' opinions or expressing opposing opinions.

When listening to others speak, we not only listen to what they're saying, but also examine body language and circumstances.

Differences within Identical Contexts: High Context

### **High Context**

- Indirect communication
- Vague feedback
- Silence is also an expression of opinion
- Keep up appearances by showing respect to your superior, 'rank mentality'
- · Stresses harmony in the group you belong to



Ex.) When expressing intent to refuse a certain business directive

#### Superior:

"Take on this project, will you? You're the only one that can run it."

#### Chinese

Is there no one else but me? Please tell me why I'm the only one.

Requests clear grounds and reasoning while somewhat truthfully indicating intent to refuse

#### Japanese

I'll look into it for now.

Doesn't say 'no' in the superior's presence, and circles around to give an indirect refusal('No' doesn't mean no)

#### Koreans

I have a lot of other projects right now, so I think that might be difficult. Please think about reconsidering.

indirectly expresses intent to refuse based on relationships and interpersonal attachment rather than logic and reason.