INTERCULTURAL QUALITATIVE COMMUNICATION RESEARCH IN LATIN AMERICA: THE IMPACT OF U.S. AMERICAN AND BOLIVIAN CULTURE IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN BOLIVIA

By

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To God, my family and the love of my life
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INTERCULTURAL QUALITATIVE COMMUNICATION RESEARCH IN LATIN AMERICA: THE IMPACT OF U.S. AMERICAN AND BOLIVIAN CULTURE IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN BOLIVIA

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As national, international, and cultural boundaries are constantly being crossed and even erased through globalization, nations, governments, and people need to first understand, and then learn how to effectively communicate with each other in order to remain competitive in the international arena. To contribute to this understanding, this qualitative international communications study analyzed the impact of U.S. American and Bolivian culture in the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia. The author interviewed nine U.S. American managers and nine Bolivian managers who work on such projects with five different international non-government organizations (NGOs). The author also examined specific cultural aspects such as their communication patterns, management and leadership styles, and their time orientation, and found that both cultures had positively and negatively impacted the procurement and execution process of development projects in Bolivia. The author derived suggestions as to how both sets of managers (U.S. American and Bolivian) could overcome the cultural differences that negatively impacted these projects.
One of the biggest challenges to development in Latin America is overcoming cultural differences when carrying out development projects or doing business in the region with foreign actors. This aspect is particularly important to Latin American countries since most of the funding for its development projects comes from people and/or organizations outside of the region, predominantly the United States. As Garay expresses in Valderrama León (2000), the number one source of aid to Latin America in 1998 was the United States with an incredible 1.093 million dollars.

History of U.S. Philanthropy

The United States has a long history of philanthropy dating back to the 1800s. It dates back to the Nineteenth century when “more than half of New York’s richest 1 percent were involved in voluntary associations before the Civil War (1861-1865) . . . [They also] used a major portion of their leisure time to fulfill civic activities” (Barnes, 2004, p. 110). This rapidly changed as wealth increased in the region. It produced a shift from just giving “time and effort” to giving “financial gifts” (Barnes, 2004, p. 110). This tradition continued until the middle of the Twentieth century when it was realized that few individuals could not be the sole financial sources for these types of projects/causes and thus “mass fundraising was born” in the United States (Barnes, 2004, p. 111).

According to Kelly (2005), “philanthropy is voluntary action for the public good, including voluntary giving, voluntary service, and voluntary association” (p. 617) which involves civic improvement and social change. Philanthropy basically encompasses the “love for humankind.” Charity, on the contrary, refers to just “helping the poor or needy” (Kelly, 2005, p. 619). It is important to note that, “the term charity was replaced by philanthropy after World
“War I”, as explained by Cutlip (as cited by Kelly, 2005, p. 619). Nowadays, the word philanthropy is much more commonly used, even though these two terms are sometimes interchanged.

Alexis de Tocqueville was one of the first to notice U.S. Americans’ orientation towards philanthropy and towards organizing themselves. For the purposes of this study, the term “U.S. American” will be used to denote people from the United States and the term “Latin American” will be used to denote people from countries encompassing the region between Mexico and Argentina along with those from Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. Alexis de Tocqueville observed and noted U.S. Americans’ particular ability to form associations “for countless political, civic, and charitable causes” (Beuttler, 2003, p. 316) and argued that “this propensity was a significant factor in the vitality and success of American democracy” (Kelly, 2005, p. 619). Kelly also remarked that “philanthropy is a unique characteristic of American society” (p. 617).

There are many suggestions as to where does this U.S. American philanthropic tendency originates. Kelly (2005) believes that it is rooted in religion, in the predominant Christian values and traditions of the U.S. American people, and on the cultural belief that some issues are better off been handled by voluntary associations rather than by the government. Beuttler (2003), on the other hand, believes that it comes from the U.S. political culture. He explains how:

The development of a ‘third sector’ of private, nonprofit organizations results primarily from the separation of church and state, a political arrangement that has given rise to hundreds of thousands of voluntary organizations, all seeking their own vision of the public good (Beuttler, 2003, p. 315).

Even Kelly (2005) agrees with this suggestion to some extent by saying how: “the nonprofit sector, also known as the voluntary or third sector of the U.S. economy, is grounded on the First Amendment of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to form associations” (p.
Regardless of where this philanthropic tendency originated from, the fact of the matter is that “in 2002, Americans gave a total of $241 billion, of which 84 percent came from individuals, 11 percent came from foundations, and 5 percent came from corporations” (data taken from the AAFRC Trust for Philanthropy, 2003, as cited by Kelly, 2005, pp. 618-619), which truly shows the strong philanthropic nature of U.S. Americans.

This aspect is of particular relevance to Latin America, as all of these philanthropic organizations, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) working in Latin America are highly dependent on funds coming from the United States. It is for this reason, that it is essential that people working on both ends (with U.S. Americans and Latin Americans) understand and accept their cultural differences in order to assure a successful implementation of development projects in the region.

**Defining Development**

When discussing development projects one needs to first understand what is meant by development. Cambridge (2002) defines development as: “a complex, integrated, participatory process, involving stakeholders and beneficiaries and aimed at improving the overall quality of human life throughout improvements in a range of social sectors in an environmentally responsible manner” (p. 144). When he talks about stakeholders he refers to “national governments and politicians, international agencies [UN, USAID], the private sector, nongovernmental organizations and cultural leaders” (pp. 144-145), and when he talks about the beneficiaries, he refers to those “who need improvement in their quality of life” (p. 145).

**History of Development Projects**

Development projects originated in the late 1940s right after World War II ended. The 1950s were characterized by the United States’ beliefs “that newly independent and other new countries had great needs, governments could socially engineer better societies, and development
assistance could be a way to politically influence other countries in the context of the Cold War and waning colonial ties,” as explained by Snyder (2002, p. 458). It is for this reason that the United States came up with the Marshall Plan and implemented throughout Europe. The success of this plan motivated the United States to use it in other parts of the world such as Latin America, which was also struggling at the time. Cambridge (2002) criticizes this approach by saying that: “In retrospect, it was naïve to think that the model could be transferred with similar success to other parts of the world” (p. 143).

The 1960s became the “development decade,” as it was accompanied by an incredible number of development campaigns and development activities (Snyder, 2002, p. 458). Unfortunately, these projects did not yield good results; “population growth remained high, campaigns widened knowledge and resource gaps between the wealthy and poor and men and women, projects ignored and sometimes threatened local cultures, dependency on industrialized nations and multinational corporations was increasing, and environmental degradation accelerated” (pp. 458-459). The 1970s were all about changing the strategies used in order to address these issues. The effectiveness of these development projects started declining in the 1980s as the governments of the countries where these projects were been implemented became extremely indebted and their economies crashed. The 1980s soon became known as the ‘lost decade’. “By the late 1980s and into the mid 1990s, budgets for international development programs became tighter in many less developed nations” (Snyder, 2002, p. 459).

Today, development projects around the world focus on the following goals designated by the United Nations in the Millennium Development Goals back in 2000. These include:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
2. Achieve universal primary education;
3. Promote gender equality and empower women;
4. Reduce child mortality;
5. Improve maternal health;
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
7. Ensure environmental sustainability; and

Additionally, when it comes to philanthropy and development projects in Latin America an aspect that should always be kept in mind is the fact that Latin America is “the world’s most unequal region” (Coatsworth, 2005, p. v). Coatsworth (2005) denotes how “modernization itself intensified pre-existing inequalities by facilitating the concentration of wealth, disproportionately rewarding knowledge and skills … and enabling authoritarian regimes of still recent memory to suppress demands for social inclusions” (p. v). He then added that “the top 20% of income earners receive roughly 15 times that of the bottom 20%” and “close to 40% of Latin America’s population live on less than $2 per day, and 20% earns under $1” (Coatsworth, 2005, p. vi). In the case of Bolivia, the percentage of people living under $1 “may be 30% or higher” (Coatsworth, 2005, p. vi). It is easier to understand how development projects and philanthropy work in Latin America by having these figures in mind.

Sanborn (2005) explains how different sponsors have encouraged philanthropy in the region. Some of them include: The Catholic Church and Christian charity, the State and central governments, the economic and social elite, migrants and immigrants, weak liberal political traditions, and international cooperation. Sanborn (2005) then calls for today’s philanthropic efforts to focus on “closing the gap between rich and poor, and empowering the latter” (p. 3). As Cambridge (2002) indicates, this is very important in today’s society since “development projects … have become synonymous with purposive social change” (p. 145).

**Procurement Process of Development Projects**

There is a very important process that needs to be understood when it comes to starting development projects, and that is the procurement process. According to the United Nations
Development Programme (UNDP), the procurement process consists of a variety of steps. It begins with a funding organization announcing that it has resources to fund certain development needs already identified by them. It does so with a document specifying the terms of reference (TOR) and the statement of work (SOW). The SOW clearly states in its TOR: Who the project’s beneficiaries should be, how many people should be hired and if outsourcing of these funds is permitted. A procurement method is then chosen by the funding organization and it could either be a request for quotation (RFQ), an invitation to bid (ITB) or a request for proposal (RFP). It also asks organizations to provide them with their organizational assessment, the type of research they will use to identify the beneficiaries, the programming process with goals and objectives, and the tactics and the evaluation of such project. The RFQ, ITB or RFP is then submitted by the competing organizations, and after receiving the project proposals the funding organization analyzes them and chooses the best offer. The contract is then awarded and negotiated with the winning organization. The contract is closely managed and once it is over, the whole procurement is evaluated.

**Background**

After seeing how philanthropy plays an important role in the development of Latin America and how most of the funds supporting development projects in the region are provided by people or organizations in the United States, this study focuses on how culture impacts the development of these projects.

The study of culture and its influence on people’s behavior at home, work, and during their everyday life only began to be studied since the late ‘50s. Some pioneers in this area were: Edward T. Hall (1959), Clifford Geertz (1973), and Geert Hofstede (1979). Though there have not been numerous studies about culture, there are many reasons why it is important to study this topic today as Schmidt, Conaway, Easton, and Wardrope (2007) suggest. Some of these reasons
include: globalization; people moving out to different countries in the world; corporations, business, organizations, NGOs and INGOs working transnationally; and simply because these studies help individuals become aware of their own cultural identity.

Even then, an area that has not been extensively explored is that of the impact of culture on managers’ communication, management, and leadership styles, as well as its effect on their time orientation. In this study, the term ‘managers’ refers to those in charge of the procurement process for development projects in Latin America, as well as those overseeing the actual execution of those development projects on site and their corresponding partners in the United States. The study of the impact of culture on these managers is particularly important because they are the ones who ultimately make the decisions about these projects and because they are the ones who are leading today’s multicultural and multinational workforce. As Hofstede’s study establishes: “Managers had to adjust the corporate management philosophy to fit the beliefs, values, and behaviors of the country in which they are working if they hoped to be successful in a complex global arena” (as cited in Schmidt et al., 2007, p. 28); or as Schmidt et al. (2007) conclude, “the combination of a global workforce and multinational organizations means that managers and employees must be able to work effectively with more and more people with differing cultures, customs, values, beliefs and practices” (p. 5). With these remarks, one can conclude that the study of the impact of culture on managers’ communication, management, and leadership style, as well as its effect on time orientation is crucial for Latin America’s development.

Furthermore, the author became interested on this topic after her experience working with an INGO (based in the United States) in Bolivia. During this time, the author was able to work under two different managers (one from Bolivia and one from the United States) in developing
several grant proposals for major development projects throughout Bolivia. The outcomes of these were very different (some succeeded and some failed) and the author attributes these results to the lack of understanding between both cultures. She witnessed how conflicts in communication, management, and leadership styles along with opposing perceptions of time, hindered the success of many of these projects. As a result, millions of dollars were wasted and the needy groups in Bolivia never received the resources they needed. It is for this reason that the author has chosen this South American country as the focus of her study.

In addition, Bolivia is of particular interest because it “has the largest proportion of indigenous people [in Latin America], who make up around two-thirds of the population … [and] is one of South America’s poorest countries” (“Country Profile: Bolivia,” 2008). The fact that Bolivian society is sharply divided between the rich and wealthy (most of whom are of Spanish decent) and the poor and needy (most of whom are of indigenous decent) is another factor that motivates the author to explore it.

Moreover, Bolivia is a fascinating country when it comes to politics. Historically, there has been a clear division of who is in charge of power. Usually those from Spanish descent were the ones in charge, until it all changed in December 2005 when Evo Morales became the first indigenous person to become a president of the country. Since his election, “his controversial strategies have exacerbated racial and economic tensions between the Amerindian populations of the Andean west and the non-indigenous communities of the eastern lowlands” (“The World Factbook: Bolivia,” 2008).

**Study Overview**

Overall, this thesis starts by defining NGOs and INGOs and giving a brief account of their history in Bolivia. The literature then focuses on reviewing how culture in Bolivia and in the United States could impact the communication, management, and leadership style as well as
the time orientation of managers in charge of development projects in Latin America. With this background information it is hoped that some key aspects, which make development projects successful in Latin America be identified. By learning how managers can understand and handle their cultural differences, this study hopes to help and encourage future researchers and current practitioners to use this information in order to have victorious development projects in Bolivia.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review begins by summarizing the origins and differences between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international non-government organizations (INGOs). After that a brief historical background on Bolivia is given. This is then be followed by the definition of culture and its influence on communication, management, and leadership styles, as well as on people’s time orientation. Last, the research questions driving this study are introduced and discussed.

Non-Governmental and International Organizations

Before analyzing how managers working for INGOs based in the United States and doing fieldwork in Bolivia play a pivotal part in the development of Latin America, it is important to understand the difference between NGOs and INGOs. Iriye (1999) defines NGOs as “voluntary and open (non-secret) associations of individuals outside of the formal state apparatus (central and local governments, police and armed forces, legislative and judicial bodies, etc.) that are neither for profit nor engage in political activities as their primary objective” (p. 422). Iriye (1999) also points out that NGOs can also be referred to as “non-profit organizations (NPO) or private voluntary organizations (PVO)” (p. 422).

As for INGOs, Iriye (1999) explains how they flourished from NGOs during the twentieth century. He refers to them as simply “NGOs that are internationally oriented” (p. 423). More specifically he defines them as such:

Organizations that are engaged in pursuing cross-national agendas, such as providing humanitarian relief to victims of earthquakes, famine, or war in some part of the world, establishing schools and orphanages abroad, engaging in educational and cultural exchanges with other countries, cooperating across national boundaries to cope with pollution and other instances of environmental degradation, or safeguarding the rights of women, children and persecuted minorities. (p. 423)
Iriye (1999) explains how INGOs have constantly multiplied during the twentieth century and gives a historical numerical account of how they grew throughout the years:

- 1910-1930: from 135 to 375
- 1930-1940: from 375 to 427
- 1940-1950: from 427 to 755
- 1950-1960: from 755 to 1,321
- 1960-1970: from 1,321 to 2,296

From the 1970s on there has been “an explosion in the numbers of NGOs, both of domestic and international varieties … today they are over one million NGO in the United States alone” (Iriye, 1999, p. 434). Additionally, he explains that with more than twenty thousand INGOs, “the whole globe is linked together by the networks established by INGOs” (Iriye, 1999, p. 434).

**Background of Bolivia**


Three groups—Indians (the indigenous peoples), mestizos (of mixed Indian and European descent), and whites of European (mainly Spanish) descent … it is estimated that Indians form nearly three-fifths of the total, mestizos nearly one-third, and whites one-seventh. The largest Indian groups are the Aymara, Quechua, and Guarani. … Aymara and Quechua are now official languages in Bolivia, along with Spanish. (“Bolivia”, 2008, ¶ 1,2)

Corr (2006) considers Bolivia “the most authentic American country [because it was] the seat of the strongest civilization at the time of the Spaniards’ arrival and because of its remoteness, it was penetrated less by European culture” (p. 34). Bolivia uniqueness is also seen in the fact that it has two capitals as stated in “Timeline: Bolivia,” (2008). Sucre is the constitutional capital where the legislative branch resides and La Paz is its administrative capital.
where the executive and legislative branches reside. Currently, those who oppose President Evo Morales’ mandate want Sucre to be the only capital of Bolivia.

In regards to religious beliefs, the major religion is Roman Catholic (95%) and Protestant Evangelical Methodist (5%), according to “The World Factbook: Bolivia” (2008), and regarding its economy, Bolivia has “the second-largest reserves of natural gas in South America … [and] is one of the world’s largest producers of coca, the raw material for cocaine” (“Country Profile: Bolivia,” 2008). This has caused many political problems to Bolivia as the United States has been trying to fight the production of the coca leaves with a crop-eradication program.

Bolivia’s political history has been very unstable. According to “The World Factbook: Bolivia” (2008) since its independence from Spain in 1825, there have been more than 200 coups and countercoups. Throughout its early history as an independent country, Bolivia lost territory to all of its neighbors during different wars. “After five hundred years of domination and colonialism … the coca grower leader and head of the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) Evo Morales” became the first indigenous President in the history of Bolivia on January 22, 2006 (Fuentes, 2007, p. 95). His election came at a perfect time as Bolivia was at the pinnacle of a political disaster. As Corr (2006) explains “by January 2006 Bolivia had six presidents in six years” (p. 32).

Moreover, Bolivia’s history has been characterized by high levels of poverty, which in turn have caused high levels of violence and social distress. The “Country Profile: Bolivia” (2008) refers to Bolivia “as one of South America’s poorest countries”. According to Bolivia’s Map of Poverty 2001, 58.6% of the population is poor. It is then explained how poverty is unequally distributed among different departments (these are equivalent to states in the United States). The statistics shows the following:
The Department of Santa Cruz shows the lowest poverty rate (38.0%). … In the Department of Potosí, 79.7% of the population is poor, followed by Beni (76%) and Pando (72.4%). The difference the departments with the highest level of poverty (Potosí) and the lowest level of poverty (Santa Cruz) is 41.7 percentage points. (“Bolivia: Mapa de Pobreza 2001”, 2001, p. 5)

Petras (1997) discusses the main reason for these high levels of poverty. He explained how Bolivia’s economic and social situation became worse right after the Bolivian government decided to implement the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1985. This new policy froze “the wages for four months while inflation raged at a 15,000 percent annual rate” (p. 17). As a result, Bolivian citizens went into strikes and protested against the government until “the World Bank, European and U.S. governments provided massive aid to fund a ‘poverty alleviation program’” (Petras, 1997, p. 18). Consequently,

The number of NGOs in Bolivia grew rapidly in response to international funding: prior to 1980 there were 100 NGOs; by 1992 there were 530 and growing. Almost all the NGOS are directed towards addressing social problems created by the World Bank and the Bolivian government’s free market policies. (Petras, 1997, p. 18)

Ever since, NGOs and INGOs have been crucial for the country’s survival. Due to the fact that these two organizations are indispensable for Bolivia’s development, managers play a fundamental role in this dynamic. Additionally, since “one of the characteristics and most powerful assets of NGOs has been their ability to establish multiple connections locally, nationally, and internationally” (McDaniel, 2002, p. 380), the emphasis of this study on managers and their communication, management, leadership style, and their time orientation are essential for Bolivia’s future.

Today, Bolivia’s success will also depend on how well its leaders can handle different domestic and foreign sectors or actors in society. As Fuentes (2007) explains on one hand, there are “the pro-imperialist business elites from the eastern department of Santa Cruz, with direct ties to gas transnationals, large agribusiness, and the U.S. embassy” and on the other “the
combative indigenous and social movements rooted in the western highlands and the center of Bolivia” (p. 97), both which have very different agendas for Bolivia’s future.

**Culture**

Culture is considerably important for the study of managers (in the United States and Bolivia) who are currently working in development projects in Bolivia because it impacts their communication, managerial, and leadership style, as well as their time orientation. For this reason, we need to first define this term.

Culture has different meanings and it a very complicated term to define as discussed by many scholars. One of the first attempts to define it was by Kluckhohn (1951) who explains that culture “consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups … the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values” (as cited by Hofstede, 1980, p. 25). Hofstede (1980) then simplifies this idea by calling it a “collective programming of the mind” that differentiates people of one group from another (p. 13).

In addition, Edward T. Hall (1959) discusses how culture forms a part of our every day life and touches all aspects of it. He also talks about culture having different levels. There is a technical level which is the most evident part of a culture and it “includes the artistic, technological, and materialistic components” (p. 22); the formal level which “includes the norms, rules, roles, traditions, rituals, customs, and communication patterns of a group” (p. 23); and the informal level which “includes the cultural history and core values and beliefs that shapes a culture’s worldview and influence cultural identity” (p. 23). Moreover, Schmidt et al. (2007) mention that there are other terms such as nation, ethnic group, race, and subcultures or co-cultures that are often used in the place of culture or along with the word culture.
For this study, the more general definition of culture that is emphasized is the one provided by Richard Lewis (2006, 1999, 1996). Lewis operationalizes culture into the following aspects: (a) *Culture*, which entails religion, cultural classification, languages, values and core beliefs, cultural black holes, concept of space, concept of time, and self-image; (b) *Culture and Communications*, including communication patterns, body language, listening habits, and audience expectations; (c) *Culture and Interaction*, which refers to concept of status, gender issues, leadership style, management, motivation factors, meetings, negotiating, contracts and commitments, manners and taboos, and how to empathize with them.

Regardless of how scholars define culture, since the purpose of this study is to analyze how culture impacts managers from Bolivia and the United States working in development projects in Bolivia and how this influences the outcomes of such projects, this section of the review of the literature will focus on the cultures of these two countries only. Nonetheless, it is important to remark that although cultural characteristics cannot be generalized, there were no studies specifically about management or business practices in Bolivia that could be used for this study, therefore, the author decided to use the literature on Latin America for Bolivia.

The author is aware that there may be many differences between the general ‘Latin American culture’ and the Bolivian culture; however, because she was born and raised in Venezuela and since she lived and worked in Bolivia, she believes that the literature about Latin America is the one that best resembles that of Bolivia. By using this literature as a benchmark, she will be able to draw a better picture of the Bolivian culture. On another note and as explained earlier, there are different terms that will be used to identify these cultures. As stated before, the term ‘U.S. Americans’ will be used to denote people from the United States; the term ‘Latin American’ will be used to denote people from countries encompassing the region between
Mexico and Argentina along with those from Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico; finally Lewis (2006, 1999, 1996) uses his own term ‘Hispanic Americas’ to denote people from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, and Venezuela (Lewis, 2001-2007). As it can be noticed the last two terms, ‘Latin Americans’ and ‘Hispanic Americans’ are used to denote the same type of people. Thus, in order to remain consistent and keep the terminology in this study simple, the author will use the term Latin American throughout this whole study when referring to U.S. Hispanic Americans and Bolivians specifically. Readers should be aware of the similarities and differences in meaning among all of these terms.

When it comes to describing Latin American and American cultures Lewis (2006, 1999, 1996) first defines Latin American culture as multi-active and American culture as linear active. According to Lewis (2006, 1999, 1996), “multi-active people are very flexible and think they get more done their way … not very interested in schedules or punctuality. They pretend to observe them, especially if a linear-active partner insists. They consider reality to be more important than man-made appointments” (p. 30). Additionally, multi-active cultures are said to share some but not necessarily all of the following traits: gregarious, plans grand outline only, does several things at once, not punctual, timetable unpredictable, changes plans, juggles facts, people-oriented, gets around all departments, pulls strings, seeks favors, delegates to relations, talks for hours, rarely writes memos, seeks out (top) key person, has ready excuses, unrestricted body language, interrupts frequently, and interweaves social/personal, just to mention some (Lewis, 2006, 1999, 1996, pp. 33-34).
On the other hand, Lewis (2006, 1999, 1996) describes U.S. Americans as having a linear active culture. They “do one thing at a time, concentrate hard on that thing and do it within a scheduled time period. These people think that in this way they are more efficient and get more done” (p. 30). Some of the traits that linear-active cultures share are: introvert, patient, quiet, minds own business, likes privacy, plans ahead methodically, does one thing at a time, works fixed hours, punctual, dominated by timetables and schedules, sticks to plans, sticks to facts job-oriented, unemotional, works within the department, follows procedures, likes fixed agendas, brief on telephone, uses memoranda, limited body language, rarely interrupts, and separates social/professional (Lewis, 2006, 1999, 1996, pp. 32-34).

Finally, Lewis (2006, 1999, 1996) suggests that when people from multi-active cultures work with people from linear-active cultures, problems usually arise. Although there are exceptions to both of the definitions explained earlier, they do provide us with a general picture of how both of the cultures in Bolivia and the United States are. Now, the following literature will focus on how culture affects communication, managerial, and leadership styles as well as time orientation.

**Culture and Communication**

First of all, Schmidt et al. (2007) emphasize the fact that “communication is uniquely suited to study the global workplace [because it] concentrates on the dynamic unfolding relations among people and their organizations” (p. 4). Hall (1990) then starts explaining the relationship between culture and communication by dividing cultures in two different communication patterns: high or low-context cultures. In high-context cultures “communication or message is one in which most of the information is already in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message” (p. 6). As Schmidt et al. (2007) restate: “information and rules are implicit” because they “draw upon intuition and utilize an indirect style of
communication” (p. 25). Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) describe how “people using high-context communication tend to be extremely reserved, with much being taken for granted and assumed to be shared, thus permitting an emphasis on understatement and nonverbal codes” (as cited in Schmidt et al., 2007, p. 25). What this means is that high-context cultures feel that the meaning of things is more often implied and vary depending on the situations.

Low-context cultures, on the other hand, use linear logic and a direct style of communication, according to Hall (1981). In a “low-context communication … the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code” (Hall, 1990, p. 6). Schmidt et al. (2007) then discusses how “the emphasis is placed on the individual, with the bonds between people being more tenuous and the extent of involvement and commitment to long-term relationships being lower” (p. 25). In these low-context cultures “meaning is explicit and dependent on verbal codes and group memberships change rapidly with individualism being valued” (p. 25).

On an interesting note, Hall (1990) suggests that, “high-context people are apt to become impatient and irritated when low-context people insist on giving them information they don’t need. Conversely, low-context people are at a loss when high-context people do not provide enough information” (p. 9). At the end, after reviewing these two concepts and analyzing the different characteristics that high- and low-context cultures have, Schmidt et al. (2007) conclude that Latin American (Bolivian) culture uses high-context communication pattern and the United States’ culture uses a low-context communication pattern.

Another way to analyze how culture is embedded in communication is by using the website: www.cultureactive.com (2001-2007) developed by cultural studies scholar Richard D. Lewis. This tool compares cultures based on his cultural studies and cultural model. In this regard, communication patterns of Latin Americans and U.S. Americans are dialogue oriented.
One of the main differences though is that Latin Americans begin with a small talk, and expect the listeners to acknowledge, recognize, and respect their national honor. Then they move to random proposals and finally they reach to an agreement, which may not always be fulfilled.

Figure 2-1 at the end of this chapter is an adaptation of Richard’s Lewis’ diagram, which portrays the communication pattern of Latin Americans as explained above.

Contrary to this, the United States has a very different communication pattern as shown on Figure 2-2 at the end of this chapter. Lewis (2001-2007) explains how they are direct, concise, and quick. He points out that this may be regarded as impolite by other cultures, but explains that this is due their open and truthful nature about their intentions. He adds that U.S. Americans do not put their heart on business.

In the end, as far as meetings go, Lewis (2001-2007) shows how Latin Americans do an extensive small talk before any meeting and then they proceed to discuss important topics randomly. Finally after discussing all the possible issues, they will reach to a conclusion. See Figure 2-3 at the end of this chapter for the Latin American meeting style. On the other hand, U.S. Americans will start with minimal talk, then go to specific points one by one, followed by a brief discussion of each point, until a conclusion is achieved. See Figure 2-4 at the end of this chapter for the U.S. American meeting style. Scholars along with these diagrams demonstrate how culture affects the Latin Americans’ (Bolivians) and U.S. Americans’ communication styles.

**Culture and Management**

Silverthorne (2005) highlights the importance of culture in management by explaining how “cultural norms influence a manager’s behavior, as well as an employee’s behavior and reactions to managerial and organizational actions” (p. 7). He also remarks that managerial styles vary even within the same culture and that management techniques do not necessarily work and/or are
efficient across distinct cultures (Silverthorne, 2005, p. 7). This leads us to conclude that there are important cultural aspects that might influence management.

Among these aspects that a manager working in a multicultural environment should be aware of are the dimensions proposed by Geert Hofstede (2001, 1984, 1980): power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism, and masculinity-femininity. For the purposes of this study only power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism-collectivism will be discussed.

Power distance is significant because it focuses on the issue of human inequality. “Inequality can occur in areas such as prestige, wealth, and power … this inequality is usually formalized in hierarchical boss-subordinate relationships” (Hofstede, 1980, p. 92). Power distance can then be defined as “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a county expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 46). In other words, society accepts power inequality in institutions or as Schmidt et al. (2007) explain, it focuses on the “appropriateness or importance of status differences and social hierarchies” (p. 26). In this regard there are then two types of cultures: high-power-distance and low-power-distance cultures. “People from high power distance cultures accept a particular social order or hierarchy. … In contrast, people in low power distance cultures believe in the importance of social equality” (p. 26).

From these two definitions, Schmidt et al. (2007) conclude that South American countries such as Venezuela (and therefore most likely Bolivia as well) are an example of high-power distance cultures and the United States is an example of a low-power-distance culture, which prefers egalitarianism. These assumptions agree with the fact that “high power distance cultures
tend to be collectivistic, whereas low power distance cultures tend to be individualistic” (Schmidt et al., 2007, p. 27).

Uncertainty avoidance refers to “the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations. This feeling is … expressed through nervous stress in a need for predictability: a need for written and unwritten rules” (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 167). Uncertainty about the future varies significantly “among people in subsidiaries in different countries; the three indicators … are rule orientation, employment stability, and stress” (Hofstede, 1980, p. 153). Just as the last dimension, cultures can have high and low uncertainty avoidance. “People in high uncertainty avoidance cultures demand consensus and do not tolerate dissent … in the behaviors of members. Rather, they try to ensure certainty and security through … rules, regulations and rituals; they … have higher levels of anxiety as well as intolerance for ambiguity” (Schmidt et al., 2007, p. 27). On the contrary, “people in low uncertainty avoidance cultures live day-to-day, regarding the uncertainties of life as natural, and they are more willing to accept change and take risks” (p. 27). With these concepts in mind, South American countries such as Venezuela (and thus Bolivia as well) are considered to have high-uncertainty avoidance culture with a low tolerance for ambiguity, and the United States is an example of a low uncertainty avoidance culture with a high tolerance for ambiguity.

Next, individualism-collectivism “describes the relationship between the individual and the collectivity which prevails in a given society” (Hofstede, 1980, p. 213). Hofstede & Hofstede (2005) further explain that “individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her own immediate family. Collectivism as its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people’s lifetimes
continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (p. 76). In this sense, for individualistic cultures “the autonomy of the individual is paramount, with personal motivation and personal goals taking precedence over group or collective concerns or interests” (Schmidt et al., 2007, p. 25). Triandis (1995) defines individualism as:

A social pattern that consists of loosely linked individuals who view themselves as independent of the collectives; are primarily motivated by their own preferences, needs, rights; give priority to their personal goals over the goals of others; and emphasize rational analyses of the advantages and disadvantages to associating with others. (p. 2)

Opposing this way of living are “collectivistic cultures [which] require an absolute loyalty to the group, and groups to which a person belongs are the most important social units” (Schmidt et al., 2007, pp. 25-26). Triandis (1995) defines collectivism as:

A social pattern consisting of closely linked individuals who see themselves as parts of one or more collectives (family, co-workers, tribe, nation); are primarily motivated by the norms of, and duties imposed by, those collectives; are willing to give priority to the goals of these collectives over their own personal goals; and emphasize their connectedness to members of these collectives. (p. 2)

Schmidt et al. (2007) also point out that decisions in these two types of cultures are made very differently, with individualistic cultures just looking out for themselves (meaning for each individual) and with collectivistic cultures looking out for what is best for the group as a whole. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2000) also had a similar cultural dimension, but they called it: individualism-communitarianism.

Triandis (1995) brings a particular dimension to these two types of culture. He brings the idea of four kinds of self: independent or interdependent and same or different. These four concepts can be combined and give rise to the following:

- **Horizontal individualism (independent/same):** emphasizes that people should be similar on most attributes, especially status (same self image);
- **Horizontal collectivism (interdependent/same):** emphasizes that people should be similar on most attributes, especially status (same self image) and it includes a sense of social cohesion and of oneness with members of the ingroup;
Vertical individualism (independent/different): accepts inequalities, and rank has its privileges (different self image);

Vertical collectivism (interdependent/different): accepts inequalities, and rank has its privileges (different self image). It also includes a sense of serving the ingroup and sacrificing for the benefit of the ingroup and doing one’s duty. (p. 44)

Looking at the definitions of these two types of cultures, it can be concluded that the U.S. American culture is an example of individualistic culture with vertical individualism, and Latin American (Bolivian) cultures are collectivistic with family been the most important group in these societies with vertical collectivism.

In addition, to analyzing the influence of culture on management through Hofstede’s cultural dimensions, we can also take a look at some examples of studies that have explored how management intertwines with culture. One of them is Project Globe conducted by Javidan and House (2001). This project studied 18,000 middle managers from 62 countries and found that “people from different cultures vary in the way they value assertive work behaviors, adhere to established gender roles, rely on procedure and policies, view authority figures, emphasize group affiliations, and emphasize performance, among others” (Chrobot-Mason & Ruderman, 2004, pp. 114-115).

On a more specific study about managers in the United States, Peterson (1993, p. 20) describes some of the dominant managerial values. These include: achievement and success, hard work, efficiency and pragmatism, optimism, Puritanism, scientific orientation, impersonality in interpersonal work relationships, equality of opportunity for upward mobility and acceptance of competition as a fact of life.

As for Latin America, Silverthorne (2005) points out that “few studies have explored managerial behaviors and values” (p. 132) in this region. He only describes one study that investigated “different sets of values … combined into four value groupings: civility (how well
people behave toward each other), self-direction (including imagination and independence), integrity (honesty and responsibility), and drive (ambition and courage)” (Silverthorne, 2005, pp. 132-133). As he explains this study was conducted in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and Uruguay. When managers from these countries were asked to rank these four aspects in order of importance, the answers were almost unanimous. All agree that integrity was first and 11/12 agreed that civility came second. Drive and self-direction were the last two.

Hofstede’s cultural dimensions highlight the aspects that could represent a problem when culturally different managers come together. Additionally, the projects discussed above demonstrate a direct correlation between management and culture. Lastly, Figure 2-5 and Figure 2-6 at the end of this chapter show the way in which Lewis (2001-2007) explains these cultural differences in management styles between Latin Americans and U.S. Americans.

Latin American management style shown in Figure 2-5 “tends to soften the delivery and the message, conveying in the gentleness of the language forms the compassionate style of an Amerindian-influenced continent which understands and accompanies human problems and suffering” (Lewis, 2001-2007). On the other hand, the U.S. American management style shown in Figure 2-6 emphasizes making the objectives very clear and then they have a tendency to “hyperbolize, exaggerating chances of success, overstating aims or targets etc.” (Lewis, 2001-2007, under U.S. management tab) in order to pump up their employee, this usually causes the objectives to be achieved in a fast manner.

**Culture and Leadership**

Silverthorne (2005) notes that, “leadership plays an important role in management and organizational success” (p. 96). Leadership according to House and Wright (1997) “is the ability to influence, motivate, and contribute towards the effectiveness of the organization of which they
are members” (as cited by Silverthorne, 2005, p. 59). In describing culturally aware leaders, Schmidt et al. (2007) describe how:

Culturally alert cosmopolitan leaders are open and flexible in approaching others, can cope with situations and people quite different from their own background, and are willing to alter personal attitudes and perspectives. Such leaders acquire knowledge about cultural influences on behavior, cultural patterns, themes or universals and integrate this understanding of macrocultures and microcultures with international business experiences. (pp. 8-9)

Furthermore, Chrobot-Mason and Ruderman (2004) emphasize the fact that today’s leaders need to know about cultural differences, about themselves (self-awareness), and have multicultural skills including: conflict management, interpersonal communication, feedback seeking, and role modeling. These cultural skills are very useful especially when leaders have to fulfill the following duties: assembling a team, developing others, and enhancing teamwork. They also pointed out that:

Effective leaders of diversity must understand differences in values, customs, beliefs, and norms across various cultures. Global leaders, those who work overseas or who manage employees from different countries, must be aware of the extent to which people from different cultures vary in the way they conduct business. (Chrobot-Mason & Ruderman, 2004, p. 114)

Even though the comments by Schmidt et al. (2007) and Chrobot-Mason and Ruderman (2004) refer to international business, these ideas are easily applicable to managers working with INGOs in development projects in Latin America.

On a different note, there are many theories that have been used to explain leadership as Silverthorne (2005) mentions. He actually reviewed some of these theories, which included: the situational leadership theory, the path-goal theory of leadership, implicit leadership theories, and transactional/transformational theories of leadership. Silverthorne (2005) then concludes that all of these theories have failed to be consistent with research analysis and that they do not take into
account the cultural factor in leadership. The only ones that have been the closest to explaining this factor have been the ones proposed by project GLOBE (mentioned earlier).

To address the cultural issue, project GLOBE came up with general frameworks for leadership in: Europe, Chinese cultures (mainland China and other Asian countries), Arab countries, Turkey, and Africa. In order to bring all of these theories or frameworks about leadership, Morrison (1992) declares that “effective organizational leadership is critical to achieving organizational success, since a causal link has been demonstrated between leadership and employee and organizational performance” (as cited by Silverthorne, 2005, p. 57). Figure 2-7 by Lewis (2001-2007) at the end of this chapter shows how the Latin American leadership style has been surrounded by the figure of a dictator or the military. “Nepotism is common and staff are manipulated by a variety of persuasive methods ranging from (benign) paternalism to outright exploitation and coercion,” Lewis (2001-2007) explains (under Bolivian management tab).

On the other hand, the U.S. American leadership style on Figure 2-8 at the end of this chapter shows a pyramidal management structure with bosses driving and motivating people or employees under them. “Managers are capable of teamwork and corporate spirit, but value individual freedom more than company welfare. … [They] also followed command-and-control style leadership,” Lewis (2001-2007) states (under U.S. leadership tab).

**Culture and Time Orientation**

The last relationship that would be explored in this section of the literature review is that between culture and time orientation. This is actually the most important relationship and factor of all, since the differences in time notion can basically impede or push forward the completion of development projects in Latin America.
Hall (1981) first discusses this idea by saying that time in cultures can be regarded as either monochronic or polychronic. Cultures who are monochronic are careful in doing things one at a time. Polychronic cultures enjoy doing many things at once. Moreover, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2000) define time in cultures as either been sequential or synchronic. Sequential time is describe as “clock time” or “time as an arrow” or as a “bunch of passing events”, and synchronic time is view as “recurrent” or “cyclical time” or “good timing” meaning that the past, present, and future are taken into account (p. 295).

Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) indicate this aspect as one of his cultural dimensions and called it long- and short-term orientation. He first defines long-term orientation as “the fostering of virtues orientated towards future rewards - in particular perseverance and thrift” and short-term orientation as “the fostering of virtues related to the past and present - in particular respect for tradition, preservation of ‘face’ and fulfilling social obligations” (p. 210). As denoted by Schmidt et al. (2007), the United States has a short-term orientation and Bolivia can be argued that it is long-term oriented culture.

Finally Lewis (2006, 1999, 1996) has been the one looking at this aspect more recently. He first explains how Eastern and Western cultures have a very different and often conflicting notion of time. He then points out that even when countries belong to the same region, the United States and Mexico for instance, they still face many problems because of the very different ways in which they view time.

Lewis (2006, 1999, 1996) then classifies cultures into different categories depending on their notion of time. In this sense, Latin Americans and Bolivians in particular, are devoid of the mañana behavior, and their perception of time is “multi-active”. What he means by this is that they are characterized as follows:
• The more things they can do at the same time, the happier and the more fulfilled they feel.
• They organize their time (and lives) in an entirely different way from [U.S.] Americans.
• They are not very interested in schedules or punctuality.
• They consider the present reality to be more important than appointments.
• In their ordering of things priority is given to relative thrill or significance of each meeting.
• Completing a human transaction is the best way they can invest their time.
• Time is event- or personality-related, a subjective commodity which can be manipulated, molded, stretched, or dispensed with, irrespective of what the clock says. (p. 55)

For a diagram on the Latin American multi-active perception of time please refer to Figure 2-9 at the end of this chapter.

Contrary to this, Lewis (2001-2007) describes on his website how U.S. Americans are time-dominated and “always appear to be impatient and in a hurry”. He explains how in the United States time is considered “linear”, which means that:

• Time is truly money.
• Time is precious, even scarce, commodity. It flows fast.
• [U.S.] Americans are people of action; they cannot bear to be idle.
• [U.S.] Americans talk about wasting, spending, budgeting and saving time.
• They are monochronic: they prefer to do only one thing at a time, to concentrate on it and do it within fixed schedule. (pp. 53-54)

For a diagram on the U.S. American linear concept of time please refer to Figure 2-10 at the end of this chapter.

After reviewing how the concept of time and culture have been studied by Hall, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, Hofstede, and Lewis it is obvious that this is the most
important aspect which managers working with INGOs in development projects in Latin America have to overcome in order to have successful outcomes.

The reason why it is important to study the issue of how culture influences the communication, management, and leadership style along with the time orientation of managers, is because as Schmidt et al. (2007) remark: “Multinational organizations [such as INGOs] will come to depend upon competent communicators who can bridge cultural differences and achieve the desired international objectives” (p.18). This is particularly important for countries such as Bolivia who depend on foreign aid for its survival. Managers working for INGOs on development projects in Latin America will need to become competent in these areas in order to get the best result from the projects. As seen on the literature, culture does affect the manager’s communication, management, and leadership styles as well as their time orientation. The degree to which these managers understand and accept these differences will determine whether such projects succeed or fail.

**Research Questions**

After reviewing the literature about the cultural differences that exist between Bolivians and U.S. Americans regarding communication, management, and leadership styles, as well as their perception of time; after understanding the importance of the procurement and execution processes of development projects, and after the author’s experience working with an INGO in Bolivia, the study aims to answer the following questions:

RQ1: How do cultural differences expressed by the Bolivian and U.S. American managers’ opinions concerning their communication patterns, management style, and leadership style impact the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia?
RQ2: In specific, how does the perception of time addressed in the literature and viewed by Bolivian and U.S. American managers impact the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia?
Figure 2-1. Latin American communication pattern

Figure 2-2. U.S. American communication pattern
Figure 2-3. Latin American meeting style

Figure 2-4. U.S. American meeting style
Figure 2-5. Latin American management style

Figure 2-6. U.S. American management style
Figure 2-7. Latin American leadership style

Figure 2-8. U.S. American leadership style
Figure 2-9. Latin American perception of time

Figure 2-10. U.S. American perception of time
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

The methodology used to conduct this study is qualitative in nature. The units of observation of this analysis are the U.S. American and Bolivian managers working with INGOs headquartered in the United States and performing development projects in Bolivia. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were used to gather data from the research participants. Interviews were conducted through phone as the research participants were either in Bolivia or all scattered throughout the United States. Participants were offered confidentiality through an informed consent form approved by the University of Florida Institutional Review Board. In this way, research participants were able to freely speak about their experiences and any risks of them sharing their opinions about possible sensitive issues that could come up during the interviews were avoided.

The author chose to do a qualitative research since it “is especially appropriate to … study … attitudes and behaviors best understood within their natural setting” (Babbie, 2007, p. 287). Babbie often refers to this qualitative research as “field research” since “it offers the advantage of probing social life in its natural habitat” (p. 289). The researcher interviewed the participants from their work place, and thus it was assured that participants were in their ‘natural habitat.’

Furthermore, the researcher chose to do in-depth, semi-structured interviews because as Babbie explains, “less-structured interviews are more appropriate” to qualitative research (2007, p. 305). He also mentions how “Herbert and Riene Rubin (1995: 43) describe the distinction as follows: ‘Qualitative interviewing design is flexible, iterative, and continuous, rather than prepared in advance and locked in stone’” (as cited by Babbie, 2007, p. 305).
The qualitative interview proceeds with the interviewer using the questionnaire as a guideline but been flexible in changing the order of the questions and allowing follow-up questions when necessary. The interviewer thus had a general idea of what to ask and what topics to explore. As pointed out by Babbie, the strength of using qualitative field research is the depth of understanding that it provides and its flexibility. The advantage of using this type of qualitative method above all is that it “provides measures with greater validity than do survey and experimental measurements, which are often criticized as superficial and not really valid” (Babbie, 2007, p. 313).

**Questionnaire Construction**

The research questionnaire consisted of 20 open-ended questions. The questions were drawn from the literature about the cultural differences on communication, managerial, and leadership styles, as well as on their time orientation of managers from Bolivia and the United States. Therefore, the questions were divided in four categories.

The first category consists of one question addressing general cultural differences: multi-active vs. linear active cultures (Lewis, 2006, 1999, 1996). The second category includes three questions that address differences in communication styles and refer to the following concepts: (1) high-context and low-context cultures (Hall, 1990); (2) communication patterns (Lewis, 2001-2007); and (3) meeting styles (Lewis, 2001-2007). The third category includes four questions that address differences in managerial styles: (1) power distance (Hofstede, 1980); (2) uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 1980); (3) individualism vs. collectivism (Hofstede, 1980); and (4) vertical individualism vs. vertical collectivism (Triandis, 1995). The fourth category has one question about the differences in leadership styles (Lewis, 2001-2007). The fifth category has two questions about time orientation: (1) long vs. short-term orientation (Hofstede, 2001); and (2) polychronic vs. monochronic time orientation (Hofstede, 2001) along with some extra
characteristics regarding this aspect (Lewis, 2001-2007). Finally, there were four general questions and five demographic questions.

Two different questionnaires were developed, one for U.S. American managers asking them questions about Bolivian managers, and another one for Bolivian managers asking them questions about U.S. managers. They were both written in English first, and then they were translated into Spanish by the author. Afterwards, a third person translated them back into English. She was able to do so, since she is a fully multilingual professional.

**Sampling Technique**

The author chose the research participants through a purposive sampling technique. A total of 18 interviews were conducted. One of the INGO was selected because the author did an internship with them. Due to confidentiality issues, the author will not disclose which out of the five INGOs she did her internship with. The other four of INGOs were selected on the following basis:

1) Their headquarters had to be based in the United States.

2) Their Bolivian office had to be based in La Paz.

By searching for INGOs that met these criteria on the Internet, the following INGOs were selected: World Vision, Pro Mujer, Project Concern International, Save the Children, and ACDI/VOCA. Additionally, these were found to be the largest INGOs currently working in Bolivia. Table 3-1 shows these INGOs along with their contact information. From these INGOs the researcher selected participants based on the following criteria:

1) Two participants have to be working in Bolivia per INGO.

2) Two participants have to be working in the U.S. office per INGO.

3) These participants have to be involved in the procurement process or execution of development projects in Bolivia.
The researcher contacted each INGO via email and/or phone in order to select all of the participants that met these criteria.

**Sample Description**

Eighteen managers working in international development projects in Bolivia participated in the study. Nine were Bolivian and nine were U.S. Americans. Out of those eighteen, six were women and twelve were men. Participants reported an average age of 42 years old (ranging from 25 to 60) with the exception of one respondent who refrained from sharing his age. Participants averaged 18 years of experience (ranging from 2 to 32) in the international development field. As for the level of education, all participants have a Bachelor’s degree. Eight out of the nine U.S. American managers have a Master’s degree, and of the Bolivian participants: three do not have a Master’s degree, two have one Master’s degree and four have two Master’s degrees. Overall, the language skill of all participants was very high. Of the U.S. American managers: three are bilingual, five are trilingual and one is a polyglot. All U.S. American managers are fluent in Spanish. Additionally, of the Bolivian managers: one is monolingual, four are bilingual, three are trilingual and one is a polyglot. Three out of the nine Bolivian managers reported having difficulty communicating in English.

In respect to their ethnic background: 7 U.S. Americans identified themselves as either: white, Caucasian, American, or Anglo-Saxons and only two identified their ethnicity as European. All Bolivian managers acknowledge having difficulty answering this question, as it is not common to classify oneself under any category in Bolivia. Nonetheless, seven declared themselves as mestizos (two specified that they were a mix between a Quechua and a Spaniard), one identified himself as: Bolivian, Quechua and American, and another one as: American, White and Hispanic.
Research Design

The researcher developed a questionnaire and submitted it to the Institutional Research Board (IRB) for approval. After approval, the questionnaire was used for in-depth, semi-structure interviews, which were conducted through the phone. Each interview lasted between 30-45min in average.

Data Analysis

The researcher transcribed the interviews in English and Spanish. The data were analyzed according to the qualitative literature by narrating the findings in a detached third-person voice. The author then selected quotes from these interviews that show agreement and disagreement, as well as the major points of views regarding cultural differences in communication, managerial and leadership styles as well as time perception of Bolivian and U.S. American managers. Edited quotes are used to illustrate the findings, according to the methods section. In the case of the interviews conducted in Spanish, relevant quotes were translated into English by the author.

Limitations

One of the main limitations is the fact that there are no cultural studies about work environment in Bolivia and thus the author had to use the literature for Latin America instead in order to fill this gap. Babbie (2007) also suggests that one of the biggest limitations with explanatory cross-sectional studies is that “although their conclusions are based on observations made at only one time, typically they aim at understanding causal processes that occur over time” and of course, there is always a “problem of generalization about social life from a ‘snapshot’” (p. 102).

Moreover, according to Molleda (2008) by doing a qualitative interview there is always the risk that the interviewer may have communicated information that biased the interviewee’s
opinions. The fact that the researcher is both U.S. American and South American could have influenced the way in which participants responded. For instance, U.S. American managers could have responded cautiously to make sure they did not offend the researcher. On the other hand, Bolivian managers could have answered openly because they felt a familiarity with the researcher. In this sense, the bicultural nature of the researcher might have been both a limitation and an advantage for this study. Future studies should be careful about this and take this aspect into consideration.

Molleda (2008) also mentions how the length of the questionnaire could have also affected the quality of these interviews and of the answers to each question. As he explains, with so many variables and concepts, participants could have not fully grasped the depth of each question. In the case of this study, U.S. American and Bolivian managers definitely seemed to have difficulty understanding the concept of uncertainty avoidance; therefore, this aspect should be further analyzed in future studies.

Additionally, it is also important to remark that the Bolivian managers that were interviewed worked in La Paz, Bolivia (the administrative capital) thus there could have been some differences between their opinions and the opinions of those working in other parts of the country. Finally, there might have been issues “regarding accurate and precise representation of populations” (Babbie, 2007, p. 187) since the sample was not taken using probability. “Field research … can pose problems of reliability … although they are in-depth, field research measurements are also often very personal” (Babbie, 2007, p. 314).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International NGO</th>
<th>Contact Information (USA)</th>
<th>Contact Information (Bolivia)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34834 Weyerhaeuser Way So. Federal Way, WA 98001 Tel: +1 253-815-1000</td>
<td>Av. Hernando Siles No. 6023 esq. Calle 15 Obrajes, La Paz Tel: +591 2 2783214 – 2 2783191- 2 2782948 – 2 2783904 Fax: +591 2 2783804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>240 W. 35th Street, #404 New York, NY 10001 Tel: +1 212 952 0181 Fax: +1 212.952.0183</td>
<td>Calle 6 esquina Costanerita Piso 3 #100 Obrajes, La Paz Tel: +591 2 278 8654 Fax: +591 2.278.8019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5151 Murphy Canyon Rd Suite 320 San Diego, California 92123 Tel: +1 (858) 279-9690 Fax: +1 (858) 694-0294 Toll Free: 1-877-PCI-HOPE</td>
<td>Calle Roberto Prudencio No. 835 Entre calles 14 y 15. Casilla 4678 Calacoto, La Paz Tel: +591 2 794738 – 2 111825 Fax: +591 2128717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54 Wilton Road Westport, CT 06880 Tel: (203) 221-4030 (800) 728-3843</td>
<td>Calle Héroes del Acre 1725-San Pedro La Paz, Bolivia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50 F Street NW Suite 1075 Washington, DC 20001 Tel: (202) 638-4661 Fax: (202) 783-7204</td>
<td>Calle 11 # 480, Esq. Sanchez Bustamante, Calacoto La Paz, Bolivia Tel./Fax: (591-2) 279-3206 Email: <a href="mailto:info@acdivoca.org.bo">info@acdivoca.org.bo</a></td>
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CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS

Eighteen people who work on international development projects in Bolivia were interviewed over a period of two months: from April 2008 – May 2008. Since half of the respondents were U.S. American managers and the other half Bolivian managers, the findings are divided into two sections. The first section contains the answers of the nine U.S. American managers in regards to the communication, management, and leadership style, as well as the time orientation of the Bolivian managers. The second section contains the answers of the nine Bolivian managers concerning the communication, management, and leadership styles, as well as time orientation of the U.S. American managers.

Responses of U.S. American Managers

This section presents the opinions of the U.S. American managers working in development projects in Bolivia in regards to the culture of their Bolivian counterparts. Two out of the nine interviewees were women and seven were men. Their reported average age was 39 years and their combined work experience averaged 16 years. Seven identified their ethnicity as white/Caucasian/American/Anglo-Saxon and two as Europeans. All U.S. American managers have a bachelor’s degree, and all except one have a master’s degree. They are all fluent in Spanish and know at least one more language.

Question 1: Traits of Bolivian Managers

All except one of the participants agreed that Bolivian managers share similar traits. Problems with keeping up with timetables were widely discussed, as well as the importance of personal relationships for Bolivian managers. There were even some suggestions made as to why these characteristics were prevalent amongst Bolivian managers. In addition, other problems were identified and some participants expressed disagreements to few traits. Overall,
77 percent of participants agreed that these traits negatively affect the procurement and execution of development projects in Bolivia.

One of the most discussed Bolivian traits was their timetable management and how difficult it was for them to keep up with deadlines. Though one participant pointed out how timetables are not as high priority in Bolivia as they are in the U.S. or Western culture, another participant expressed her frustration by stating:

It just has been difficult … regardless of the fact that we make a task list for proposal development and … have people’s names right next to each task, … it seems like we still find challenges in meeting those deadlines. … We are not communicating clearly … there is this wall in our communication styles, and we are not connecting, we are not able to agree on a plan and then actually stick to that plan. (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008)

Two participants further explained how this issue had a negative impact in the development of project proposals to the extent that one of their multimillion-dollar-project proposal had to be cancelled because the Bolivian managers were not sending the required information on time. In the same way, another interviewee talked about how one of their projects was highly affected by this because the Bolivian team was not responding to their inquiries on a timely manner. As he explained, he had to go down to Bolivia in order to get things moving. After this experience, he concluded: “it seems like there was a lot of contending minds and a lot of disorganization; … basically all of these things have delayed the project” (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008). At the end, one interviewee summed it all up by saying: “I wouldn’t say that their timetables are unpredictable, I would just say that they are not good at keeping timetables … so I guess that is the same thing” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008).

The other aspect that was frequently mentioned by participants was the importance of relationships in the Bolivian culture. Collectively, they agreed that: “the time orientation is much more people oriented, than fact oriented” (In-depth interview, May 29, 2008), therefore, an interviewee remarks: “[it is] more likely to see people not necessarily completely punctual
because again the interaction with people is more important than what the clock says” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). The importance of relationships in Bolivia and by Bolivian managers was so high that it could have turn up a culture of corruption and made it difficult to “work 100 percent clean” (In-depth interview, May 29, 2008), as expressed by the concerns of two respondents.

To these two characteristics of Bolivian managers, having trouble maintaining deadlines and of having a high regard for personal relationships, almost all of the respondents gave reasons or suggestions as to why, they believed, these traits were present amongst Bolivian managers. One of these was their polychronic behavior. As one respondent explained: “Bolivia tends to be polychronic in their time management, and that just means that … they are more interested on whatever they are doing at the moment is the most important thing” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). He further explained how this manifested itself during meetings:

So if it is a meeting with someone or there is something happening that needs their attention, a Bolivian will not stop what they were doing, cut short an interaction with another person or meeting … in order to stay on time, where an American would. (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008)

The fact that most Bolivian managers were not punctual was also attributed to this polychronic nature. Because Bolivian managers did too many things at once, “it made it difficult to prioritize [since] management got pulled in too many different directions” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008). Moreover, when it came to not being able to turn in project proposal on time, some suggested that it is due to their inability to manage time properly along with the fact that most proposals have to be written in a high level English, which most Bolivian managers do not possess.

Other participants suggested that the reason why Bolivian managers have trouble maintaining deadlines was because they have a very positive attitude and are very optimistic in
life. Some referred to many instances where Bolivian managers were having trouble in trying to meet a deadline and did not let them know that they needed help. In this case, Bolivians felt that they could still accomplish it. As one interviewee putted it:

One of the worst ways that it would manifest itself is that when there is a problem and there is going to be a delay, there is a tendency not to say anything about it. Just to ignore it. … Maybe it is that they are optimistic or that they have a positive attitude, but rather than identifying the real problem … there is a tendency to say: Oh we are working on it, it is going to get fixed … and it just sort of never happens. So it is kind of a general optimism maybe, or just not wanting to admit once things are not working. (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008)

It is important to note that all participants expressed their willingness to be flexible and work around, adjust or extent deadlines if necessary and when possible, in order to help Bolivian managers meet their goals. Even then, Bolivian managers did not let the U.S. American managers know when a deadline was not working for them.

Other factors also added to the problems mentioned above. For instance, the fact that currently Bolivia is undergoing a period of political instability was seen as a factor that contributed to delays in the procurement and execution process of projects. Bolivia’s infrastructure was also an important aspect that was considered. A respondent explained how Bolivia is a difficult place because transportation, infrastructure, access to Internet, to goods, and services is limited. In addition to this, there are road blockades and problems at the port, which he concluded, made it “not an easy operational environment that you can necessarily compared to the U.S. or Western Europe” (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008). Furthermore, there were other communication challenges such as U.S. American managers requesting specific information in bullet points via email to their Bolivian counterparts and never receiving all answers back, or Bolivian managers planning the grand outline only when writing proposals. It was described how they often do a rough sketch of project proposals without having too much regard for whether they could fulfill the things they state they are going to do or not. Lastly,
only one respondent pointed out the complexity of the Bolivian culture. He noted that before talking about the Bolivian culture one needed to understand how the Bolivian culture is made out of many different groups, such as the Aymaras, the Quechus, the Latinos, the Guaranís, and the Guarayos just to mention few.

Finally, there were some aspects mentioned in this question that some respondents found erroneous. For example, one interviewee did not agree with the aspect that Bolivians frequently interrupt. He clarified: “I find Bolivians to be extremely polite, very well mannered, very professional, and very polite” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). Another participant remarked that even though all of these characteristics were true, he did not see how they actually affected the procurement or execution of development projects in Bolivia. At the end, however, there was only one interviewee who did not agree with any of the aspects mentioned in this question. The reason for this, as he explained, was because:

[Our] NGO works with different municipalities and also works with community groups … [and] when partnerships are developed at the municipal level, when they are part of what’s called here the PALO -Annual Operating Plan (Plan Anual de Operación) . . . the problems that you mentioned are minimized and less likely to occur. [Additionally,] what you do have in Bolivia overall is good popular participation which drives money to rural areas. (In-depth interview, April 1, 2008)

For this participant, the key to not having these problems or diminishing them was by having partnerships with the local government and the communities, along with having a good popular participation in the place where the NGO is working.

Question 2: High-Context Culture of Bolivian Managers

Eight out of nine interviewees agreed that Bolivian managers have a high-context culture. As one participant remarked: “context is more important in Bolivia than it is in the United States where it is essentially unimportant, and it is really much more what people say” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). Additionally, there was affirmation by the majority of respondents that
the Bolivian managers have an indirect communication style. One of the ways in which this manifested itself was when Bolivian managers tried to give input and share ideas with their supervisor. As one respondent recounted, her Bolivian counterparts often asked her to give their ideas to their supervisor and act as a liaison between them because they felt they could not directly do it. This caused problems, as expressed by the respondent’s concerns, because it delayed progress and made it difficult to know how the word gets passed along to management when U.S. American managers are not in town. Moreover, this indirect communication style caused problems of compliance. For instance, one of the interviewees pointed out how Bolivian managers would often tell him that they were going to do something when in reality they neither had the capacity nor the intention to actually do it. This shows the subtleties that come along this indirect communication style.

On another note, other participants recalled feeling occasionally lost during conversations with Bolivian managers. Implicit rules and understatements seemed to be the reason for this. As one interviewee described: “I definitely think that there are some norms, some rules that I feel like I am not understanding. … It’s just such a challenge for us to agree on something and to move forward” (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008). Sharing the same feeling, another interviewee added: “I definitely have gotten that vibe that they assumed that you catch the subtleties of the conversation and sometimes you don’t” (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008). To all of this, U.S. American managers described been concerned for having come across as pushy in the eyes of the Bolivian managers because they were not understanding or getting the information from them accordingly. This created misconceptions as suggested by a participant, “Bolivians … see many of the Americans been a little bit pushy and rude and unrealistic, and the Americans are thinking like the Bolivians aren’t managing it correctly” (In-depth interview, May
The only two exceptions to this issue were when the country director or managers were either expatriates from the United States or Canada or when the Bolivian managers had studied abroad in the United States. It was only then that these problems were resolved because in that case they understood the cultural norms of both countries.

There was only one participant who strongly rejected the aspects mentioned in this question. As he explained, none of this occurred in the NGO where he worked because they had many partnerships with the local government and with the communities, and because the community participation was very high. He went further to explain that,

> When we have partnerships with municipalities or other NGOs we also draw up memorandums of understanding where we spell out: what would this NGO do? What would the municipality do? What would people do? So every one of these roles are defined so I think this reduces misunderstandings. It doesn’t mean you don’t have misunderstandings but it means that things are mapped out a little more carefully when they start. (In-depth interview, April 1, 2008)

Likewise, another interviewee thought that utilizing and choosing specific communication strategies when working together could decrease these misunderstandings. He described one of these strategies as simply been “sensitive to the cultural aspects of communication” (In-depth interview, April 14, 2008). Even though he did agree with all the concepts brought up in this question, he just did not think they affected the procurement or execution of projects in Bolivia. This just shows that even if communication styles are not the same, differences can always be worked out.

**Questions 3-4: Bolivian Managers’ Communication Patterns and Meeting Style**

The majority of respondents agreed that Bolivian managers usually begin conversations or meetings with a small talk, but clarified that it does not affect in any way the development or execution of projects in Bolivia. They mentioned that this aspect is just part of their culture and that it is something that they have to follow. It is also something that varies from person to
Only two respondents discussed having to lead conversations during meetings in order to stay on track, and only one respondent seemed to have problems with it:

It seems that to actually move towards a goal one of us at the international office really needs to lead the meeting and needs to ask the same question like 10 times. … It is like our Bolivian counterpart will talk in circles and he’ll address the issue but never actually answer the question and so then we have to ask again, … which can be difficult when we are dealing with language barriers. (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008)

Overall, however, U.S. American managers thought that this question was an overgeneralization, and that these aspects did not impact projects because “decisions are made at all levels” and because “the most important thing is that project leaders and managers are sensitive to those cultural aspects” (In-depth interview, April 14, 2008), as explained by one of the participants. In addition to this, when it came to the point about Bolivians expecting U.S. American managers to acknowledge and recognize their national honor, all except one, disagreed with it. They said that Bolivians are not very nationalistic at all, especially as compared to people from other countries. One example of this is their lack of respect for their President Evo Morales. During many conversations that a respondent had with his Bolivian counterparts about President Evo Morales, he found that they felt that he was “a conk and an embarrassment” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008) to Bolivia. This was very shocking to him because he thought that being the first indigenous president of Bolivia people would respect him and look up to him more.

Lastly, the majority of interviewees disagreed with the aspect that when Bolivian managers reach an agreement, they do not often fulfill it. As explained by most of them, Bolivians are very committed and stick to what they say as much as U.S. Americans. They also believed that Bolivians have a different timeframe and thus it might not always match with the U.S. Americans’ timeframe, except when there is a very important deadline to which they usually pull through. Only one respondent saw a slight change in this behavior and it was during meetings or
conversations with actual donors. In this case, she noted, “there is a tendency to make commitments that I don’t really think that they ever had any intention of fulfilling [and] … instead of under promising and over delivering it’s the opposite … they over promise and under deliver” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008).

**Question 5: High-Power Distance of Bolivian Managers**

In total, the majority of participants (89%) found that Bolivian managers have a high power distance culture. This conclusion was reach after discussing all of the different aspects that make up this characteristic. Among these were: the fact that Bolivian managers rarely challenge U.S. American managers, that everything has to be approved by Bolivian directors or managers, the importance of education and the use of honorifics, and the lack of organizational trust. All of these negatively affected the procurement and execution of projects in Bolivia. However, there was hope given by a respondent who suggested that this would no longer be the case within the next couple of years and also by those who offered solutions to this issue. At the end, only one respondent did not think this aspect applied to Bolivian managers.

One of the ways in which this high power distance characteristic portrayed itself was when it came to Bolivian managers sharing their ideas, agreements, and disagreements with their U.S. counterparts. The consensus among participants was that Bolivian managers do not often share, challenge, or questioned their decision-making. As one interviewee explained:

> In the U.S. people feel very comfortable and it’s quite healthy to challenge your boss with different ideas. And what I find in Bolivia … is that people are very accepting of whatever the boss says. They have this believe that the boss is the boss because he or she knows the best. … There is not as much of a healthy challenge. (In-depth interview, April 1, 2008)

The interviewee went further to explain that there was this attitude of acceptance emphasized by “My jefe me dijo” (My boss told me) mindset. This was also attributed to the evident hierarchy in Bolivia. As one respondent remarked, this was obvious in his organization’s
every day decision-making and processes and in their management style because Bolivian managers only made decisions according to this hierarchy. In this hierarchy, U.S. American managers were perceived to be at the top of the ladder and thus Bolivian managers were very accepting of their decisions. As another participant noted: “if you are in a superior position [or] even technical positions you are not questioned as they would be questioned in a European or North American context where it is much easier to criticize your boss” (In-depth interview, May 29, 2008). This added to the fact that there are not many flat organizations in Bolivia (including the INGOs) further proved this point.

High-power distance as also seemed in the way in which everything needed to go through the top personnel in Bolivia (i.e. directors, managers, etc.) before it was assigned or sent to the right person within the organization. One interviewee explained this issue as follows:

Definitely it does seem like everything needs to be checked off and approved by the country manager, always needs to be copied and everything has to go through him, and it does seem difficult because I feel like projects can often get bottle in that. If we could just connect with someone else we could probably move things forward much faster. (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008)

She then illustrated how this could cause a lot of problems for development projects. For instance, she once had to collect project reports from the Bolivian office and it took her several months before she got them all. At one point, she had 25 outstanding reports. Only by talking to her supervisor, the country director was finally able to delegate this task and contact the right people from each department. The problem ended up being that she was not able to bypass the country manager and asked for the reports directly to each department because of the hierarchy that is in place in the Bolivian office. Problems delegating tasks also seemed to be an important factor of this problem. As another interviewee remarked:

If you are going to run a project you have to delegate some authority for some level of decision-making power at other levels or else you are not going to get anything done. … It is almost as if the actual concept of delegation it is not actually understood. Like
delegation is giving people things to do, not empowering them with the responsibility and the decision-making authority. (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008)

The hierarchical structure along with difficulty in delegating tasks definitely ended up being an issue. The departments were not able to send her the reports because they needed the country’s director approval first and thus bottlenecks were created. As it was understandable and as pointed out by the interviewee, she would have save so much time if she had been able to get the reports from the right people directly from the beginning.

Another aspect, which was a proof of the high-power-distant Bolivian culture, was the importance of education and the high use of honorifics. Education is highly regarded in Bolivia. People with a bachelor’s, a master’s, or a Ph.D. degree were seen as having higher societal status than the rest of the population. One of the ways in which this is manifested is by how they were referred to with an honorific title. Engineer, professor, doctor, licenciado, or licenciada were just some of these. One respondent noticed how even amongst themselves they called each other with these honorifics, even when they have been working together for years at a time.

“Whenever I talk to the office manager in Bolivia, she always refers to the country manager by his degree title, like engineer, which is weird because everyone here at the international office calls him by his nickname” (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008). In the same way, Bolivian managers use these honorifics to refer to their U.S. American counterparts. As one respondent explained: “I do not consider myself a superior or a boss, but I get emails from people who I actually interacted with, and I don’t expect, some sort of hierarchy to this, but I get emails saying “Estimado Jefe” [Dear Boss]” (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008). One of the fallbacks of been this formal and proper was that it created bottlenecks, as another respondent suggested. By respecting so many lines of seniority, she explained, things just did not get done efficiently.
Additionally, this hierarchical structure resulted in lack of organizational trust. One respondent expressed how there was not enough “confianza” or trust due to this high respect for hierarchy; as he said: “it is respect, but they do not have that trust or that confianza to come and talk to me if there is a problem” (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008). This definitely inhibited the participatory environment within the organization. As another interviewee pointed out:

In hierarchical structure you have people who do not feel like part of the decision-making process and you have a greater chance that they would sort of not buy into the program or whatever. So hierarchy can be good if you are trying to get a lot of stuff done quickly but it is not sustainable on the long term. (In-depth interview, May 20, 2008)

This lack of trust could have also been a reflection of fear to their superiors. One respondent remarked: “if you fear your supervisors, then you are not going to provide key information” (In-depth interview, May 20, 2008). Organizational trust is needed to obtain high participation and involvement from coworkers and communities.

Although, an interviewee expressed optimism in that this hierarchical structure is disappearing and that it will no longer be in place for the next couple of years in Bolivia and in the rest of the world due to high technological advancements and the empowerment of people through widely available information, the bottom line was that this structure is currently affecting negatively the procurement and execution of projects in Bolivia. This high-power-distant culture slow these processes down and in a development environment where deadlines are a key issue, this can be critical. This type of culture also inhibits high levels of participation, as a participant explained:

People who are not … high in that power order … just don’t participate to the fullest extent so I think the consequences is that the full value of the human potential is not realized. Because you have a whole segment of population or staff that doesn’t feel that is their place to contribute and so you end up not benefiting from the full potential of the staff. (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008)
Nevertheless, there were many suggested solutions to this problem. First, bosses, managers and directors have to make sure they are seeking out input. Unless, they seek it out, they will never get it. Additionally,

Bolivian managers [have to] foment participatory relationships with their team members, that way they are not perceived as been a hierarchical person in terms of they make the decisions and they make their teams feel like their input is valuable and they are part of the decision making process. (In-depth interview, April 14, 2008)

Other participants opted to establish a protocol in their Bolivian offices where they did not have to go through the national director only to get things done. The key was to always copy the director on the emails, and in that way he/she did not feel that anybody was stepping over his/her boundaries/hierarchical position. In their attempt to reduce the issues that came along with a high-power-distant culture, some even went as far as to restructuring their whole Bolivian office. They are changing their Bolivian office to a much flatter structure, “more kind of matrix management type structure” (In-depth interview, May 20, 2008).

Finally, one respondent begged to differ with this aspect of the Bolivian culture. He found Bolivians to be “very questioning of authority and power structure and much more so than some other countries” (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008). Evidence of this, was the massive quantity of protests, and the power struggle that continuously takes place in Bolivia, especially along the political lines. He attributed this to the complexity of Bolivia, and the fact that there are so many different groups of people, with different interests and agendas. His observation referred to Bolivia’s macro level.

**Question 6: High-Uncertainty Avoidance of Bolivian Managers**

All interviewees agreed that Bolivian managers have a high uncertainty avoidance culture with low tolerance for ambiguity and one refrained from answering this question due to his lack of experience in the subject. To the majority of respondents, Bolivia is one of the most uncertain
places in the world. Proof of this are the many coups that have taken place within Bolivia’s recent history, as well as with the fact that there have been so many different presidents who have taken office during the last couple of years. One interviewee explained that, “there is tremendous uncertainty, conceptual instability, economic instability because of the dependency of Bolivia on extractive industries like tin” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). There is, however, a positive side to this, as one respondent denoted: “people are used to changes … people here in Bolivia learn to live with this kind of social unrest and with certain higher level of unrest compared to a lot of other countries” (In-depth interview, May 29, 2008). Participants across the board believed that Bolivians manage uncertainty well.

It is due to this uncertain environment that Bolivian managers were cautious and liked rules and regulations. They liked to know exactly what their responsibilities were and preferred people to be clear with them. Bolivian managers were found to try to ensure certainty through rules and regulations. In referring to their Bolivian office, one of the interviewees noticed that “they really have very clear structures within their office, who does what, how the general system is, sort of like the rules for their office” (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008). Another interviewee supported this observation by expressing how “our national office in Bolivia likes stability, they like clarity in roles and responsibilities” (In-depth interview, May 20, 2008). The only downside of this trait, as discussed by a participant, was that Bolivian managers spent a disproportionate amount of time on work plan and annual plans. He described how:

There is a tendency here that if we do enough planning, we are going to avoid corruption and everything will be fine. … So there is this undue obsession with documents and rules and I’m not talking about procurement rules or rules that guarantee transparency, I’m talking about their own rules. (In-depth interview, April 1, 2008)

This excessive amount of time spent in preparing and procuring is thought to be harmful to any organization, especially when it came to its financial situation.
Another downside of this was that it caused a lot of frustration amongst U.S. American managers. Though Bolivian managers were well equipped with managing uncertainty that was not the case for U.S. American managers and thus conflict emerged. “When there is some unique situation that arises, or the rules have not yet been well defined … they [U.S. American managers] tend to struggle [especially] with some unique accounting situations, and some unique procurement situations” (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008). This in turn slowed processes down because then the U.S. American managers needed to establish some rules and develop a system, which did take some time. In this regard, the participant believed that Bolivian managers need a lot of guidance. To illustrate this, he recounted how:

There have been situations where they seem like they just can’t or aren’t able to get through without getting more guidance, and so that tends to push work on to other people, which slows things down and it has some certain effects. (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008)

On the contrary, one respondent did not think that uncertainty affected the outcome of the procurement and execution processes of projects but just the way in which these processes got accomplished. As he described, “the uncertainty and political or social aspects in Bolivia affects what priorities are given to procurement and it affects what activities are implemented in different ways in terms of strategies and overall tactics” (In-depth interview, April 14, 2008).

Overall, both U.S. American and Bolivian managers have to learn how to deal with uncertainty, as it is a reality, an everyday issue in Bolivia.

**Question 7: Collectivistic Culture of Bolivian Managers**

All except two of the interviewees confirmed that Bolivians have a collectivistic culture. The two other interviewees did not know if this aspect was true or not. This collectivistic characteristic was very obvious to all participants. Social capital was unquestionably more
important in Bolivia than it is in the United States. One of the ways in which this would
manifest itself was through project requests. As one interviewee pointed out:

Requests for community improvement or social and economic conditions usually come
from groups as opposed to individuals. Most decisions are made as groups. They are not
always necessarily community-level decisions, but they are made with the intent to have
community input. (In-depth interview, April 14, 2008)

Moreover, this trait was notorious by the length in which people stay working for the same
organizations and/or companies. Long-term employment is very common in Bolivia and the turn
out rate is very low as described by one participant. “People stay with the organization for a
long long period of time, and if there are opportunities to move people to other projects or bring
people back later, that happens frequently” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). Organizations are
loyal to the employees and employees are loyal to the organizations. On the other hand, in the
United States people would usually stay 2-3 years with the same organization and then move on
to the next one. This is due to the fact that “in the U.S. people do not feel very loyal to their
company, and the other thing is that companies are not loyal to their employees” (In-depth
interview, May 2, 2008). In this case, Bolivia is a country where loyalty to companies, collective
attainment of goals, and success is more important than individual success.

This feature was definitely more accentuated in rural areas than urban areas where
communities share practically everything. However, it is important to note that since there are
many different ethnic groups and rural communities in Bolivia, this did not necessarily mean that
they share this collectivistic characteristic with each other. This trait was certainly more
emphasized among one’s own community, such as indigenous (Quechua, Aymara, etc), lower,
middle, or upper class and others. In this sense, the country did seem divided as expressed by
one participant.
Nonetheless, this collective feature was beneficial for projects on the long run. The fact that people worked closely together for long periods of time created a family-feel atmosphere, as noted by an interviewee. This social structure was positive because it helped projects to be successful. Another respondent remarked how “they can really get things done and they can really work effectively with communities and other organizations because again their philosophy is built on long-term relationships” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008).

Collectivism in Bolivia also had some negative aspects. One of them was the fact that “there is a tendency [of Bolivians] to protect people who may have done something wrong” (In-depth interview, April 1, 2008). Nobody wanted to blame anybody because of loyalty to the group and “nobody takes full responsibility for things” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008). This made it difficult for U.S. American managers to hold people accountable for their actions, as expressed by an interviewee. This loyalty was also evident when it came down to hiring personnel. As one respondent recalled, in many places in Bolivia people get hired because they are friends or family members of the people already working for the company and/or organization rather than because of their capacity. Nonetheless, he was quick to point out that this does not happen in his NGO since they have rules against it.

Another downside of this collectivistic culture was that in the Quechua and Aymara cultures, for instance, this collectivistic nature was very prominent and thus it made it difficult to move forward with anything. As noted by an interviewee, “it is a challenge in developing programs because it is difficult for people to stay [move] forward outside of the comfort zone of the community” (In-depth interview, May 29, 2008). Additionally, it was challenging to reward individual performances in collectivistic societies as described by one respondent:

There are some issues … with employing center plans that reward sort of individual performance because there is sort of a strong emphasis on a team. Sometimes the
individual reward system backfires because it can destroy sort of the kind of natural tendency [of Bolivians] to work together in teams. (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008)

Above all, the most important aspect was that all of these examples proved the collectivistic nature of Bolivian managers.

**Question 8: Vertical Collectivistic Culture of Bolivian Managers**

All except one interviewee believed that Bolivian managers have a vertical collectivistic culture. Only one interviewee did not know whether this was true or not. This vertical structure was apparent between U.S. American and Bolivian managers. One participant noticed how “there is a perceived vertical structure of the international office (IO). Like working at the IO were somehow above in some hierarchy” (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008). For this reason, she explained how most Bolivian managers were obliging to the U.S. American managers’ requests. Even if they were not going to fulfill those requests, they would still say that they were going to do it. In addition to this, this vertical structure was also detected between Bolivian managers. As one participant described:

Bolivians feel entitled to respect, and they feel themselves that they deserve respect from their underlings, [especially] project directors. They have a … hierarchical attitude, that they are above the masses, and that they deserve respect and honor. People sort of have to go out of their way to do things for them. (In-depth interview, May 20, 2008)

Bolivians managers were found not only to have a vertical culture, but also to share a collectivistic nature. To illustrate this, a participant described an experience she had while working in Bolivia for a couple of months. A Bolivian manager and she had to make some changes to a manual and present it to the rest of the Bolivian team. The Bolivian team was not happy with the changes that they had made, and she took full responsibility for it. Afterwards, her Bolivian co-worker called her aside and told her that she did not have to take individual responsibility for their work, that since both of them had worked on the project together, they
should have both received the blame as a team. To her, this was an obvious case of this
collectivistic nature of the Bolivian culture.

These vertical and collectivistic traits of the Bolivian culture were attributed to Bolivia’s
history and tradition. The fact that Bolivian managers accept inequality, and believe that ranks
have their privileges is rooted in the government’s long history of corruption. As one respondent
described, continuous corruption within the Bolivian government has created a distrusting
national environment that promote these types of traits. Moreover, this vertical collectivistic
culture perpetuates because of tradition. As explained by another interviewee, this type of
system where one has to go through a lot of pain and work before attaining a high rank and
authority often persists because those who have already gone through the process are reluctant to
let it go. “That kind of mentality is very common. If you sort of have to go through a process to
get to somewhere, and it is long and painful, then you are reluctant to let other people bypass it”
(In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). Finally, U.S. American managers found that Bolivian
managers have a sense of serving the in-group. According to one interviewee, Bolivian
managers always made decisions thinking on the group’s overall benefit first.

**Question 9: Bolivian Managers’ Leadership Style**

The majority of interviewees agreed that leadership in Bolivia is characterized by
nepotism. However, the extent to which this is true was highly debated. Some saw nepotism
within their organizations, others saw it in the public and private sector but not in the NGO
sector, and few did not see it anywhere. There were some reasons given as to why this Bolivian
trait is so complex and finally Bolivian leadership was redefined.

Those who found this nepotistic leadership of Bolivian managers to be eminent in their
organization described a manipulative organizational environment. As one respondent
described:
I have definitely seen lots of manipulation in ways that don’t seem to be constructive or healthy. I have seen leadership styles where the approach is very charismatic and … relationships … are based on loyalty and trust. There [is a] … strong element of loyalty that even when someone leaves the organization, that expectation of loyalty is still held there. (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008)

As she further explains, this manipulative leadership style affects the efficiency of the procurement and execution processes of projects in Bolivia because “rather than … taking everyone out in their merits and assigning roles and responsibilities based on that, sometimes things are assigned based on who is loyal, rather than who is really competent to do the job” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008). Additionally, another participant expressed how there are many people in his organization who are relatives (i.e. husband and wife, or father and son) and who constantly watch out for each other. “If they hear about an opening they say: Oh you know my son isn’t working right now, and maybe he could do that” (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008). Nonetheless, he affirmed that these coworkers were not hired because of nepotism but because they were competent for the job.

On the other hand, some interviewees saw this nepotistic trait in the public and private sector but not in the NGO sector. As one interviewee pointed out this is normal because: “any government that wins an election hires their own people” (In-depth interview, April 1, 2008). In addition, the reason why this is not the case for NGOs, as explained by another interviewee, is because the processes in which they pursue grants, and execute projects are extremely regulated by the donors’ guidelines. With grants and proposals donors require NGOs to submit the best resumes and CVs possible of the people who will be working in the project. This in turn eliminates the possibility of having nepotism.

Conversely, it is important to remark some of the aspects that make this nepotistic behavior difficult to understand and determine. For instance, an interviewee explained how the talent pool in Bolivia is much smaller than that of the United States. Thus, Bolivian managers might seem
somewhat more nepotistic than U.S. American managers when it comes to hiring. In reality, he explained:

There is a smaller pool of people who are qualified and there is a higher likelihood that those people know each other. So it is not necessarily that they are hiring someone who is not qualified. It is just that whoever would be qualified is your friend, or you would probably know them. (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008)

Another reason given for this nepotism in Bolivia is that Bolivians have a collectivistic culture, therefore this “sense of belonging to … a social group encourages you towards nepotism” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). This interviewee goes as far as outlining some of the benefits of nepotism. According to him, nepotism is good because “you can trust people with whom you have these other linkages with, because you know them, and they will not necessarily violate your trust because of these other strong ties” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). In all, he believed that nepotism in Bolivia not only reinforces their collectivistic nature, but also prevents people from not fulfilling their duty since the social pressure is very high. Finally, he defined Bolivian leadership as follows:

It is definitely more hierarchical or vertically oriented than in the United States. There is less horizontal discussion of what is going to be done. The organizational chart is more vertical than horizontal and… that is not necessarily a bad thing as long as the blaze of people from lower down the work-chart is able to effectively more up and down the chain. (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008)

An important aspect to remember, however, is that the family atmosphere that exists in Bolivian offices allows people in lower rankings to share their opinions with their supervisors. In conclusion, an interviewee believed that “leadership style defines what level of nepotism will be tolerated” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008).

**Question 10: Long-Time Orientation of Bolivian Managers**

Participants had opposing views regarding Bolivians’ time orientation. In total, 44 percent of the interviewees thought that Bolivian managers have a long-time orientation, 33 percent
disagreed, and 22 percent were not sure. Those who agreed saw how Bolivian managers were focused on building and maintaining relationships in order to obtain long-term benefits. As one respondent mentioned, Bolivian managers do a better job when they have a long period of time to plan things out before they actually have to execute them. In this sense, she believed that Bolivian managers have a long-term orientation rather than a short-term orientation. Another participant noticed how Bolivian managers:

Seemed to be very interested in saving, getting a home, and building a future for themselves. They are less worried about if they have 10 bucks on their pocket, instead of going to spend it right away, they are more likely to go and save it. They make sure that they are securing their future rather than just enjoying the present. (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008)

Even when planning or executing projects, he explained that Bolivians are always looking for ways not only to benefit the communities at the present moment but also how to make them more durable and sustainable. He believed that “Bolivians are very interested in securing their present but also making sure that they have a more secure future as well” (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008).

On the contrary, some respondents thought that Bolivians’ time orientation was more geared towards the past rather than the future. As explained by an interviewee, “they are very much formed by their past and it is still a very present reality” (In-depth interview, May 20, 2008). For example, when executing health campaigns, people would not even think about the future of their children, they would just think about how to make it to the next day. This, according to another participant shows that the Bolivians’ time orientation depends on which social class they belong to. In this sense, the lower class tends to have a short-time orientation based on the past and the upper middle class tends to have a long-time orientation geared towards the future. The remaining two participants were not able to tell the difference in the Bolivian’s time orientation.
Question 11: Polychronic Time Orientation of Bolivian Managers

The majority of interviewees agreed that Bolivian managers have a polychronic time orientation. Only one participant disagreed, and another one did not know whether this was true or not. Lack of punctuality was definitely apparent among Bolivian managers. “In regards to time management people are very unpunctual and not very responsible” (In-depth interview, April 1, 2008). This was especially seen during meetings. As one respondent said, “whenever they say that they are going to be somewhere at six … they really mean seven or 7:30” (In-depth interview, May 20, 2008). U.S. American managers definitely noticed how Bolivian managers were neither interested in punctuality nor schedules. This was a problem as one of the participants expressed: “it is not just been late for things, but completely changing them without paying attention to the fact that there are other people involved, and that they need to be notified” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008).

This distinctive time orientation of Bolivian managers was also characterized by their “mañana” behavior. A great example of this had to do with calendars. As one interviewee reported, he received 10-15 January to December 2008 calendars just in the month of March. The problem with this, as he discussed, was that: “calendars are something that you prepare every year, you can prepare calendars for the next 10 years because you know what the dates are, so this is a perfect example of lack of planning” (In-depth interview, April 1, 2008). This anecdote best exemplified the Bolivian culture relaxed perception of time.

The polychronic time orientation of Bolivian managers did affect projects in Bolivia. For instance, there was a project proposal that was never submitted to a donor because the Bolivian managers did not turn it in on time to the U.S. American managers. Even though the U.S. American team had been pressing and reminding the Bolivian team of the deadline, they did not deliver and ended up turning everything the day after the proposal was due. Missing deadlines
and delayed processes are definitely a problem that comes with this polychronic time orientation.

As one respondent remarked, even during meetings this polychronic behavior was obvious:

> When you are in a meeting … they are constantly answering their cell phone or constantly accepting interruptions. So a meeting that would have taken half an hour ends up taking one hour and a half, because they just don’t focus on what they are doing. They are willing to take any interruption. (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008)

Additionally, Bolivian managers will not start a meeting until everyone has arrived. This could take up to one hour after the meeting was supposed to start, which is a total waste of time according to one interviewee. This problem of constant delays also extends to many other processes. One participant mentioned how his NGO does a lot of publications, and explained how these are often delayed because people from different ministries and/or donors take a long time in signing them off. In general, this polychronic nature produces many setbacks to projects.

Nevertheless, there was a very interesting observation made by one interviewee in regards to how this Bolivian characteristic affects mostly the procurement rather than the execution process of projects in Bolivia. “Over a long time horizon” he explained, “it all evens out because if it doesn’t get done today … it gets done tomorrow or next week, and eventually it will be ok” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). However, when it comes to a short period of time such as project proposals and the procurement process which has such a short-time turn around, “it could be a problem, because things have to be done at a certain time and in a certain way and if they are not done … you lose something” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008).

Above all, U.S. American managers found this polychronic behavior to be rooted in the Bolivian managers’ perception of time. “Deadlines are very relative to people here in Bolivia … they are more kind of orientations than really deadlines” (In-depth interview, May 29, 2008). This provokes a lot of frustration among U.S. American managers. As one respondent remarked,
most Bolivian manager would not even let them know if they are going to miss a deadline. She argued that:

Maybe it doesn’t even occur to them to let you know because the deadline is just there. It is not really set in stone. It is just kind of something that is part of the project but it doesn’t carry a lot of weight. (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008)

According to another interviewee, this might be attributed to the fact that the Bolivian culture is not a culture dictated by deadlines, and that it is not the norm for most people to follow or meet deadlines. Therefore, there is no incentive for anybody to follow them. As he expressed: “If I do not respect deadlines, and I do not have any negative impact on my performance, or on my salary … then what is the incentive for working with deadlines?” (In-depth interview, May 29, 2008). The point is that this is the way in which Bolivian do things and thus U.S. American managers have to adjust to it, as pointed out by another participant.

In order to tackle this problem, many respondents gave some suggestions as to how to approach it. First and forth most, U.S. American managers have to be extremely clear with Bolivian managers when giving them instructions on project proposals and/or project deadlines. A participant gave the following advice:

I would say that they have to be extremely clear in what your deadlines are, reinforce it about three times, reinforce it on paper, reinforce it orally, and then follow up every single day. Otherwise they are not going to pursue those deadlines as actual deadlines. They are just going to perceive them as flexible ideas instead of hard and soft deadlines. (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008)

Then, many interviewees suggested tricking Bolivian managers with deadlines. The majority of U.S. American managers admitted telling Bolivian managers that the deadlines were due before they were officially due in order to actually get things done on time. “You really run into these kinds of problems because people are a little bit optimistic in what can be achieved” (In-depth interview, May 29, 2008). Likewise, U.S. American managers emphasized the idea of
“la hora Inglesa, o la hora Americana” (English time or U.S. American time) (In-depth interview, May 20, 2008). This means that things are due on the date that they are said to be due.

**Question 12: Communication between National and International Offices**

All respondents communicate mainly through email and instant messaging but also use fax and phone. Most respondents communicate in both Spanish and English, with a preference for using English with the headquarter office and Spanish with the Bolivian office. There were only two interviewees who said that all of their communications were in Spanish.

**Question 13: Communication with the Bolivian Office: Easy or Challenging?**

In total, 77 percent of the interviewees found communicating with the international office easy. However, there were many of them who found communication through email challenging. As one respondent recounts: “Answering emails promptly is not something that you can depend on but if you could find somebody who is on chat is pretty easy to get their attention probably because they are willing to interrupt whatever they are doing” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008). In this case, the respondent explained how this “negative characteristic” can be useful because they are ready to answer even if they are in the middle of a meeting. Instant messaging was definitely a device that all of them agreed facilitated communication between both offices. Finally, two interviewees found communication challenging depending on the person they were talking to and because of language differences.

**Question 14: Language Barrier**

The majority of respondents did not think there was a language barrier with their Bolivian counterparts. The main reason for this is that all U.S. American managers are fluent in Spanish. However, many noted that the English capacity in Bolivia is low, even though Bolivian managers are highly educated in Spanish. This brings some issues since Bolivian managers cannot always rely on the U.S. American managers to translate all the time. Not only is
translation a concern for many because things get easily lost in the process, but also it makes it difficult to coordinate meetings when not all invitees are fully bilingual. This lack of high-level English also prevents many Bolivian managers from taking important professional development opportunities, such as international training as it would be too expensive to send them and then have to hire a translator just for that event. Even worse, sometimes they have to send the same person over and over to all the international trainings, as one respondent shared. Nonetheless, still the majority of respondents found it more of an issue for the Bolivian managers than for them.

Now, when it came to writing project proposals respondents were divided on the issue. Some said they did not have a problem at all as they would receive the whole proposal in Spanish and they would personally translate it into English, and others expressed similar thoughts as the following interviewee:

There is definitely a language barrier for written communication, verbal communication and in email. … But again in the high-order proposal preparation when you are dealing with very complicated themes and ideas in English, which 90 percent of Americans would not be able to do well … [because it is] very field specific, it is not easy and so if it is not easy for me in English, then it is definitely not easy for non-native English speakers. (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008)

More than the language barrier, however, one respondent discussed a cultural barrier. She says that it is just not a problem with the language, “like we can use words that we think are representative and that are conveying certain messages, but that is not how it is interpreted” (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008). She concluded by stating that: “we [Bolivians and U.S. American managers] are not operating on the same set of norms or ideas of how things should and should not be” (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008). It is because of this, that all respondents highly encouraged having people who are not only bilingual but also bicultural in the Bolivian offices.
Question 15: Overall Impact of Cultural Differences

Collectively, participants agreed that all of the cultural differences discussed during the interview affect the procurement and execution process of development projects in Bolivia. Nonetheless, they were clear to mention that the degree to which these were affected varied notably. Some said that these differences do not affect Bolivia much more than other countries where these projects also take place, and that it is just part of working in international development projects. Others said that there were much bigger problems than these cultural differences. However, most found some common factors that affect these processes, namely: language and culture, logistical challenges, protests and delays, and over promising and under delivering. Finally, many expressed their optimism in overcoming all of these cultural differences by working closely together with the Bolivian managers and by offering many solutions to these problems.

Two of the most widely believed factors that impact the procurement and execution processes of projects in Bolivia are language and culture. As one participant remarked: “language is culture and in this case, it is true” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). The fact that language is different and that many Bolivian managers are not all fluent in English did seem to cause delays and to slow processes down. Language barrier was especially critical during “high-order processes” such as proposal preparation and/or report writing. An interviewee recalled a time when these processes were slowed down so much because of these two factors, that unfortunately they were not able to submit the proposal on time. In this case, Bolivian managers were not answering and providing the required information to the U.S. American managers on a timely manner. She argued that: “proposals are put on the back of the room and sort of forgotten about … and [that] it hurts their financial situation” (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008). Missing
deadlines for project proposals or execution/update reports was highly attributed to language and cultural differences.

To further illustrate this, she explained how Bolivian managers are able to submit their own proposals to PROCOSI (which is a Bolivian donor) without a hitch because “it’s in the local language, it’s in the culture that they understand, and so they are very successful at it” (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008). On the contrary, when it came to U.S. American and European donors, they always had trouble submitting proposals by the deadline. The reason for this is that they were dealing with different languages and cultures, which have different time orientation. Deadlines for Europeans and U.S. American donors are much stricter than Bolivian deadlines. As seen by these experiences, language, and cultural differences do affect the procurement and execution processes of projects in Bolivia.

This cultural issue also provokes logistical issues. As explained by one of the interviewees, one of the major logistical problems in Bolivia is trying to implement international policies and regulations within a Bolivian context. As it is known, INGOs are subject to international standards, which in this case, do not always match the Bolivian standards. He described how:

We have certain appropriate standards from an audit stand point and from an effective management stand point, and then the issue becomes … more of a cultural issue and more of a logistical issue around just been able to effectively implement them [the standards] in all cases. (In-depth interview, April 18, 2008)

In addition to having to follow these international standards, INGOs also have to make sure they follow donor standards, which may include U.S. American, European, or United Nations standards. This just adds another layer of logistical problems, which affect all of these processes of projects in Bolivia.
Furthermore, protests are one of the main cultural issues that affect development projects in Bolivia. These delay and slow down the procurement and execution processes of such projects. As one respondent explained, road blockades and work stoppages impede people from getting to work, it causes many businesses to close down, it causes private investors to doubt the market and not invest in Bolivia, which all together just end up damaging the whole economy. He described how Bolivians have “that type of culture that is so accepting of street protests and what I would consider economic terrorism, which does terrible damage to the country as a whole” (In-depth interview, April 1, 2008). This cultural characteristic, which gives way to “economic terrorism” and causes delays, negatively affects development projects in Bolivia.

Another factor that triggers problems is the Bolivian tendency to “over promise and under deliver” when procuring or executing projects. As one interviewee explained, all of these cultural issues, especially “promising more than you can deliver” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008), have caused detrimental damages to the organization’s reputation. For instance, “in terms of executing the project, there have been times when we had to write reports and just admit that we didn’t do what we said that we were going to do” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008). This has produced such an atrocious damage to their reputation that it has even “caused some donors to question when we submit a proposal whether or not is something that we can actually do” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008).

Hierarchical structure was one more factor that seemed to still be in place in Bolivia and which affects projects’ preparation and implementation according to one interviewee. Though they respond better to a flatter structure, she argued that this hierarchical structure makes them long for guidance. For instance, when talking about their future she remarked:

I don’t necessarily think that they think of the future so you need to give them something to think about for their future, you need to give them real hope and real opportunities both
for the future and for today in order to be effective and you need to be practical. (In-depth interview, May 20, 2008)

She went further to explain this need for guidance when discussing the procurement process. As she pointed out, they do not need help in designing and implementing programs; however, they do need help in making sure they are following the donor’s standards. For example, with all the regulations and rules that come with U.S. government grants, Bolivian managers need a lot of guidance from their U.S. American counterparts.

The most important aspect of all is that altogether U.S. American managers felt that all these cultural differences could be overcome if they work closely together with their Bolivian counterparts. The need to have culturally sensitive U.S. American managers was emphasized. It was suggested that this could be achieved either through having “on the job experience” or through training. Additionally, involving Bolivian managers from the beginning of projects helped reduce these misunderstandings and problems tremendously. One interviewee even proposed that U.S. American managers should know how to effectively communicate directly and indirectly at the international, national, and sub regional level with their Bolivian counterparts. Another participant reminded that U.S. American managers have to keep doing checks and balances on Bolivian managers and getting updates from them continuously in order to reach deadlines on time as well as factoring in the environment of the country when planning programs.

Moreover, a respondent pointed out that U.S. American and the Bolivian culture are much more similar to each other than other cultures. “Despite all of our differences, there are not tremendous differences between the United States and Bolivia. We are all sort of Americans in some weird sense” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). In that way he felt that Latin Americans and U.S. Americans understand each other intuitively better than when compared to other
cultures. Remembering the similarities rather than the differences between both cultures seemed to help overcome these issues. Lastly, one participant disagreed with the fact that these cultural differences could negatively impact projects. He attributed delays to different cultural expectations from both sets of managers but believed that Bolivian and U.S. American managers could always work these differences out.

**Responses of Bolivian Managers**

This section presents the opinions of the Bolivian managers working in development projects in Bolivia in regards to the culture of their U.S. American counterparts. Four out of the nine interviewees were women and five were men. Their reported average age was 44 years and their combined work experience averaged 18 years. Seven identified their ethnicity as Mestizos (mostly a mix between Quechuas and Spaniards), one as Bolivian/Quechua/American, and one as White/Hispanic/American. All Bolivian managers have a bachelor’s degree, two have one master’s degree and four have two master’s degrees. All except one said they spoke at least one other language besides Spanish (including English) but three recognize having trouble with communicating in English.

**Question 1: Traits of U.S. American Managers**

The majority of participants agreed that most of these characteristics were evident among U.S. American managers with the exception of them being introverts. They were found to be outgoing, talkative, active, and impatient. There was a noticeable difference between U.S. Americans managers who had lived and traveled outside of the United States and those who had not. Those who had traveled were found to be more cultural sensitive and flexible to the Bolivian culture. Likewise, those who work in development projects were found to be more understanding and open-minded than any other U.S. Americans.
Overall, U.S. American managers were found to be concise, concrete, and precise. Their communication style was found to be direct and at times defiant. These traits were apparent through their writing style as exemplified in their proposals and reports. Such tendency was attributed to the fact that U.S. American managers have a formal and methodological mindset. They are organized, work better by doing one thing at the time, have a high respect for schedules and timetables, and their culture is based on facts and focused on results. One of the ways in which this methodological characteristic was seen was through different donor’s guidelines. For instance, according to one interviewee USAID’s logical framework is a good representation of how the U.S. American culture is centered on results. Even the fact that they are punctual shows this methodological trait, because it emphasizes planning in advanced. In all, they are practical.

Another aspect of the U.S. American managers’ culture that was of particular interest was the management of their privacy. It was noted that U.S. American managers highly value their privacy and thus leave emotions outside work. Most of them made a clear separation between their professional and personal life. However, as one respondent explained, some interrelated both with the hope of future job opportunities and for networking purposes. In this sense, relationships were found to be oriented towards the future, as they were looking on how to benefit from such relationships.

Aside from the fact that all of these characteristics were eminent in U.S. American managers, it is worth noting that respondents saw how they were able to easily adapt to the local culture. As expressed by a respondent, once they are on-site they realize that their ways are not necessarily the ways of the communities where they work. This cultural clash along with Bolivia’s political and economic situation forced U.S. American managers to be flexible.
The impact that these traits have had on the procurement and execution processes of projects in Bolivia varied significantly according to the respondents’ opinions. One interviewee did not think that they had any impact over these processes. Another one saw how they caused problems between team members and in the work environment, but not in the actual outcome of the projects. Others observed that the U.S. American managers’ tendency to separate their personal from their professional life was perceived by Bolivians as a way for U.S. Americans to position themselves in a higher hierarchy.

Above all, culture did have a clear impact over these processes. As an interviewee explained, the U.S. American culture influences how things get done and how they are represented. He mentioned that proposals are a good example of this as they are very methodological, systematical, and very concrete just like the U.S. American culture. Along the same lines, another participant illustrated this issue and shows how it can generate a problem:

Proposals are focused on specific issues. This shows how their culture is oriented towards very specific objectives, goals, numbers, and results. Thus whenever we [Bolivians] use language that is less objective it does not have as much value at the moment the proposal gets evaluated. We Latin Americans have a very fragmented way of thinking. We have trouble defining specific issues and thus our explanations are much vaguer and not so direct. (In-depth interview, May 8, 2008)

The fact that both U.S. American and Bolivian managers have very different approaches to writing proposals creates a big problem as the procurement process gets delayed and conflicts arise among people. The interviewee remarks how Bolivian managers are always asked by U.S. American managers to shorten up the narrative in proposals and/or reports and to be more specific with the objectives, strategies, and results. This frustrates the Bolivian team as they feel they are being limited to express themselves and that U.S. American managers are being insensitive with them. When it comes to writing, the clash in mindsets between U.S. American and Bolivian managers create conflicts between both groups as they are interpreting and
executing projects very differently. On a positive note, one of the interviewees pointed out how these U.S. American traits help Bolivians stay on track and get things accomplished. Bolivians’ relaxed and careless behavior is juxtaposed with U.S. American strict and methodological behavior. Additionally, some of the participants mentioned how they like U.S. American managers’ structured way of thinking because they knew what was going to be the next step and knew to where they were headed.

**Question 2: Low-Context Culture of U.S. American Managers**

All Bolivian managers agreed that U.S. American managers have a low-context culture. They were found to have a direct communication style through which they would go straight to the point in an explicit manner during conversations, meetings, and even in reports. It was suggested that these characteristics originate not only from their U.S. American culture but also from their educational training in international development. In addition, this direct communication style was seen as coming straight from the English language. “In the English language one cannot be digressive … so the language itself makes people have this direct communication style” (In-depth interview, May 6, 2008). Another respondent added: “language is not only a representation of the culture, but it also shows through the way in which people act. I think language influences the way in which people carry themselves out” (In-depth interview, May 13, 2008). These two observations support the general belief that language is culture.

Furthermore, it was clarified that U.S. American managers knew which communication style to use depending on which audience they were addressing. For instance, when they were in their NGO office and with their NGO staff, they would always use this direct communication style; however, when they were in a meeting with communities or project’s beneficiaries they did not use it because they knew it was inappropriate. According to one interviewee, most Bolivian communities have their own protocol when it comes to meetings. For these
communities, “there needs to be an introduction and a bunch of other things before you can discuss the actual problem” (In-depth interview, April 24, 2008). In this sense, Bolivians thought that U.S. American managers had the ability to switch back and forth from both communication styles depending on their audience.

Above all, every one of the interviewees saw how the U.S. American managers’ low-context culture had negatively impacted the procurement and execution processes of projects in Bolivia, with the exception of a few positive things. From an administrative and management point of view, the positive side of this characteristic was that U.S. American managers gave clear and explicit orders that made staff members become more productive, according to one respondent. There are no doubts in what everyone has to do and thus the processes run somewhat more efficient. “It helps achieve concrete goals” (In-depth interview, May 6, 2008). Nevertheless, there were more negative than positive aspects related to this direct communication style.

First and forth most, the fact that U.S. American and Bolivian managers have opposite communication styles proved to be a problem when it came to working together in projects. As a respondent observed: “we [Bolivians] like to taste the pill before swallowing it, but the fact that the communication from U.S. American managers is very direct can cause issues with us Bolivians” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). Adding to this, another participant described how Bolivian managers like to be broad and not go straight to the point, and on the other hand the U.S. American managers like to be very precise and go straight to the point. This, in her view, caused many Bolivian managers to feel very frustrated because they felt that they had to over simplify everything, especially proposals and reports. Directness caused oversimplification.
Having to deal with simplifying and summarizing proposals and reports was a big problem for Bolivian managers. The majority of respondents suggested that this had to do in part with the English language as mentioned earlier. In contrast to English, which is very precise and concise, Spanish has many words that can have many different meanings. “There are words whose meaning depend on the context” (In-depth interview, May 13, 2008) and if one does not understand the context then misunderstandings arise. This affects projects as a whole because at the end Bolivians feel that they are doing double the work, the same task over and over. For instance, a participant described how Bolivian managers write 20 pages or more when they do a report or a proposal because that reflects their Latin American way of thinking. As he points out, that is unacceptable to U.S. American managers because proposals and reports are too long, which means that they would not read it. They rather have two pages instead of 20. The problem in doing so expands because “it is not just about writing and translating them, but also about writing them from the Western point of view, which in the end makes us [Bolivians] do double the work and we end up with two projects” (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008).

Another aspect of this low-context communication style of U.S. American managers that negatively affected projects in Bolivia is the fact that they are too focused on results. As one respondent remarked, “U.S. Americans are very focused on this because they are paid to do so, and if they do not achieve these goals, then they are not good professionals” (In-depth interview, May 6, 2008). On the other hand, Bolivians are more interested in doing things and reaching goals just to show off among their peers and because they want to nurture their personal relationships. They are more concerned about what people might think or say instead of the actual goals and results of the projects. In this sense, he explained, Bolivians are drawn more to the personal side than the factual side. Along these lines, Bolivian managers perceived U.S.
American managers: Separating their personal relationships from work relationships very well. At work, they can tell you things in a very direct way, which can affect you, but which you know they are doing from a professional perspective. Then when you get out of work, it is as if they had never told you anything, like that did not happen. You are still their friend and they do not have a problem with you. To us, Latinos, that affects us a lot because we mix our personal and professional life. (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008)

Additionally, U.S. American managers were often perceived as rude. The fact that their low-context culture focuses so much on direct communication and verbal codes, limits their ability to perceive and understand other types of communication. For instance, they do not pay attention to non-verbal codes and implicit language. According to one respondent, in Bolivia body language is important. The fact that U.S. American managers do not even notice it frequently creates issues. This happens commonly during meetings. Starting from the point when they have to greet each other, Bolivians noticed that U.S. Americans established a great distance between them. This formal greeting was a high contrast to the emotional and affectionate Bolivian greeting. As a consequence, Bolivians feel that U.S. American managers are distancing themselves from them and thus feel awkward. To be more specific, the interviewee denoted: “We need time to get close to them and to build up trust before going directly to the verbal communication to discuss whatever the issue might be” (In-depth interview, May 8, 2008). Other occasions where Bolivians also thought that U.S. American managers were rude was at the moment of wrapping up meetings. Quite frequently, U.S. American managers, especially the young ones, would leave meetings without saying goodbye to the Bolivian team. This was particularly disrespectful to Bolivian managers. In all, the direct and low-context culture of U.S. American managers affected more negatively than positively the
procurement and execution of projects in Bolivia. They just focus too much on verbal rather than non-verbal or other types of codes and communication styles.

**Question 3: U.S. American Managers’ Communication Patterns**

Collectively respondents found U.S. American managers to be direct, concise, and quick. Some attributed this communication style to the English language and explained how they speak in a very direct and concrete manner because the language is direct and concrete. This trait was also seen in the way in which they separate their professional from social life and in the way in which they are more factual than personal oriented people. First, one respondent denoted how U.S. American managers were not careful with what they said due to of this direct communication style, which often harmed people’s feelings. On the other hand, Bolivians were very careful in what they said because they did not want to hurt or offend anybody’s feelings. As she explained, Bolivian’s work relationships extended to their personal relationships. “In Latin America, whatever you do at work affects your social life. Because those who are your friends at work, are also your friends outside of work” (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008).

Second, when it came to being factual vs. being people oriented, U.S. American managers’ communication style was focused towards facts and figures. As another participant denoted, when there was a failure to reach a goal, U.S. American managers did not look at and were not interested in what the causes of this failure may have been. As she explained:

> For them, excuses and justifications do not matter. They are too focused on results and are not interested on how we got there. So there is this gap between the cause and the effect. They do not like to deeply analyze the negative causes of why something did not work out. It is a culture focused on rewarding accomplishments only. (In-depth interview, May 8, 2008)

In addition, interviewees found that this direct communication style caused U.S. American managers not to put their heart on business. One of the ways in which this was evident was through daily communication. As one respondent remarked, U.S. American managers do not
leave space in conversations to reflect and analyze the actions taken by the organization through its projects. There is this lack of retrospection. “It is always about what is tangible or about what directly affects projects” (In-depth interview, April 4, 2008). However, the respondent explained how U.S. American managers do not take into consideration that Bolivia is undergoing a historic moment and that NGOs who work in Bolivia and for Bolivians play an important role during this time. This, in her view, clearly shows how U.S. Americans do not put their heart onto business. Moreover, U.S. American managers are often too technical and forget about the human side of issues. According to another participant, this makes Bolivians perceive U.S. Americans as cold in nature. Having their heart on business, she explained, means knowing about the cultural, economic, political, and social aspects of the Bolivian culture and in this sense the majority of U.S. American managers do not know nor understand any of these. These observations confirmed that U.S. American managers do not put their heart on business.

U.S. American managers’ direct, concise, and quick communication style along with the fact that they do not put their heart on business negatively and positively affected the procurement and execution of projects in Bolivia. First, this communication style made Bolivian managers perceive U.S. American managers as apathetic, close-minded, and even mean because of the way in which they expressed themselves. Communication often seemed one way. “We understand them, but sometimes they do not understand us. It is not a two-way communication” (In-depth interview, May 13, 2008). Then, the fact that they do not put their heart on businesses affected the evaluation of projects. As an interviewee explained, U.S. American managers would often think that projects have failed because they are just looking at the results and the numbers; instead Bolivians would think that the project was successful because of its impact on communities. In this case, U.S. American managers were more interested in knowing if
everyone who was supposed to participate in projects attended, rather than if the ones who came were truly impacted and learned from these projects.

On the contrary, this communication style had some positive effects on projects. The fact that U.S. American managers know how to separate personal from professional life helped develop projects faster and in a more efficient manner than if they were headed by Bolivian managers. Furthermore, this direct, concise, and sharp communication style proved to be helpful when drafting, editing, and working on proposals. Since proposals have to be written in a concrete language, this helps Bolivian managers clarified their ideas, goals, and strategies for projects. Lastly, only one participant did not think these characteristics affected the procurement and execution of projects in Bolivia.

**Question 4: U.S. American Managers’ Meeting Style**

All except one interviewee agreed that U.S. American managers start meetings with a minimal talk and then go to specific points one by one, followed by a brief discussion of each point until a conclusion is reached. U.S. American managers were found to know how to conduct meetings efficiently. Their meetings were well structured with rules, schedules and agendas. This practice was attributed to the fact that their perception of time revolves around focusing on: efficiency, efficacy, and results, and to the fact that they are very methodological. They like to be concise and precise because they do not have too much time. Having well structure meetings allowed them to discuss all the points one by one. In this sense, U.S. American and Bolivian managers have opposite cultural practices, as noted by a respondent. The only interviewee that disagreed with this said that U.S. American managers who work in international development projects are much more culture sensitive than the majority of U.S. Americans and thus they are more flexible to these cultural differences. For this reason, he explained, they try to give meetings in a Bolivian style.
The impact that the U.S. American meeting style had on projects proved to be more negative than positive according to almost all participants. First of all, the fact that U.S. Americans followed meetings’ agendas very strictly undoubtedly limited participation, discussion and debate among all parties involved, as expressed by many interviewees. There were several occasions where other important issues came up during a meeting, and U.S. American managers disregarded them and moved on with the meeting because they were not on the agenda, as recalled by one participant. One of the problems with this is that it “endangers creativity. Anytime you have something that is so inflexible, you limit creativity” (In-depth interview, May 8, 2008). The U.S. American meeting style also caused processes to be too mechanical. As many participants argued, the human side of projects often gets forgotten. Bolivian managers called for U.S. Americans to remember that in development projects, they are dealing with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, and that they not only need to adapt to these cultural differences but also show their understanding through their actions. The counter consequence of not doing so is that projects will not be sustainable because Bolivians are not buying into them.

Additionally, there was another problem that often occurred during meetings and it was due to the U.S. American managers’ tendency to break up a dialogue in Spanish in order to start speaking with another U.S. American manager in English. This according to one interviewee completely stopped communication during a meeting and made it difficult to get back on track to whatever they were discussing. According to him:

They exclude everybody from the conversation and take advantage of certain moments to ask questions to one another without having any respect to the fact that we are in the middle of a meeting. This just shows their bad manners and lack of respect for us. More than us thinking that they might be telling secrets or talking about one of us, I think it is just plain disrespectful. (In-depth interview, April 3, 2008)
This clearly upset many Bolivian managers as they saw this as a purposeful attempt from the U.S. American managers to be rude to them. As pointed out, U.S. American managers know very well that many Bolivian managers do not speak English. In addition to this, there were other things that also angered Bolivian managers. One of them was the fact that U.S. American managers would greet Bolivian managers in a very distant and cold manner, and some times they would not even greet them. Moreover, there was a concern among Bolivians that “not everything is shared during meetings. There are decisions that are very fundamental to projects and which are made directly by them” (In-depth interview, April 24, 2008) without the consensus and the opinions of Bolivian managers. Lastly, the only positive impact that the U.S. American meeting style had on projects was that it produced more productive and efficient meetings according to one respondent.

**Question 5: Low-Power Distance of U.S. American Managers**

All together interviewees found U.S. American managers to have a low-power distance culture in which they tried to be as egalitarian as possible with Bolivian managers and Bolivian communities. This U.S. American trait was especially obvious to all interviewees because it was such a big contrast with their Bolivian culture. As pointed out by a participant: “we [are the ones who] assume that just because they are coming from the North, they have more power than us” (In-depth interview, April 3, 2008). However, it was described how this is not the case at all for U.S. American managers. All respondents saw how they would give everyone the right to speak to express their opinions, and noticed how they were given equal treatment and equal set of rights as their supervisors. Bolivians felt empowered to speak up and remarked that the notion that “the boss is always right” did not apply with U.S. American managers. These actions truly showed their egalitarian nature. Collectively, participants thought that this low-power distance
trait was one of the U.S. Americans’ strongest characteristics for helping them achieve high levels of efficiency and productivity at work.

An interviewee illustrated this low-power distance trait with a variety of anecdotes. For instance, she explained how whenever they had to go to a project site by car, Bolivian managers would usually sit in the front seat because they were the supervisors, that was their spot and that is how it is understood to be. On the other hand, U.S. American managers did not mind seating anywhere as long as they got to the project site. This to her was a clear prove of this egalitarian trait. In the same way, U.S. American managers would greet everyone in the Bolivian office in the same way, whereas Bolivian managers would greet everyone differently. U.S. American managers did not make those distinctions when greeting the staff. From the watchman to the country’s director, U.S. American managers greeted everyone in the same way and with the same respect. This showed how U.S. American management was horizontal, in contrast to the Bolivian management which was vertical.

This U.S. American characteristic was also evident in their hiring process. Bolivian managers noticed how U.S. American managers earned their positions within the organization by assiduously working instead of by nepotism, which is very common in Bolivia. A respondent described how U.S. American managers achieved high-ranked positions because of their merit and dedication to work. He remarked how:

U.S. Americans know who they are. They know what they stand for and know how much authority they have. They also know what the rules of the game are and recognize that their authority comes from their experience. They have reached those high-power positions because they have truly earned it. (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008)

The only time when this egalitarian trait was not seen was with U.S. American donors such as USDA or USAID. As expressed by the majority of participants, donors often showed a high-power distance with Bolivian managers and communities. They had an authoritative attitude and
were ignorant about the Bolivian culture. As remarked by an interviewee, “being the donor, they have ‘the power’, and since they are arriving to a ‘third world country’ then you have to more or less follow their norms and rules. They make you feel as if they are doing you a favor” (In-depth interview, April 30, 2008). Even when it came to writing methodologies for projects, USAID for instance, was extremely vertical to the point that they even told Bolivian managers what to write in all the messages. In this sense, this high-power distance attitude did not have anything to do with the U.S. American themselves, but with the actual institution.

This low-power distance trait of U.S. American managers had both a positive and a negative impact on the procurement and execution process of development projects in Bolivia. Some of the positive effects included the fact that Bolivians felt part of the projects. They were made part of the decision-making process and thus they bought into the project’s ideas from early on in the process. As an interviewee shared: “the fact that Bolivians can participate and are able to contribute a solution to any problem, makes them feel part of the project” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). This trait was also good because it prevented the abuse of power within institutions.

This trait also had some negative effects on projects and one of them was not being able to hold people accountable for their actions. As described by a participant, since everyone gets to participate in the procurement and execution process, it makes it difficult to figure out who messed up in the project once something goes wrong. This participant recounted how:

At the moment there is a problem with a project or an activity, the fact that many people have participated in the decision-making process makes it sometimes impossible to identify who is the one responsible for the project or activity. This frequently happens and at the end, we do not know whose head we need to behead. (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008)

Basically, this trait made it difficult to take corrective measures once things go wrong in projects. In a way, it ends up being nobody’s responsibility or nobody’s fault because the work
has been achieved and carry out as a group. Another downfall of this trait is that sometimes U.S. American managers failed to recognize that Bolivian communities had a high-power distance structure. This would sometimes cause problems between both groups because U.S. American managers would often failed to respect such hierarchies.

Question 6: Low-Uncertainty Avoidance of U.S. American Managers

Interviewees had dividing opinions about this aspect. Half of the respondents thought that U.S. American managers had a low-uncertainty avoidance culture with a high tolerance for ambiguity and the other half disagreed. Those who agreed saw how U.S. American managers easily adapted to the uncertain environment in which Bolivia lives. As a respondent remarked: “U.S. American managers … are willing to take risks without a problem. They are definitely people who take risks, and do not have a problem with changes and with dealing with uncertainty” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). This certainly seemed to be a trait among U.S. Americans who work in the development sector, according to one respondent.

The rest of the participants who agreed that U.S. American managers have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture with a high tolerance for ambiguity noticed how they would always remain calm in moments of ambiguity. An interviewee described how they took all these uncertainties very lightly, especially those in high positions like directors. They were never as worried as the rest of the Bolivian team. It was suggested that this may be the case because they have much more experience in these types of situations within the development field. Also, “if something bad happens here in Bolivia, the world does not end for them. They can just go somewhere else because they have other opportunities” (In-depth interview, April 4, 2008).

As a matter of fact, U.S. American managers were found to be more oriented towards changes and innovation than Bolivian managers. For example:
When our new director arrived, the first thing he did was to change our strategies and change the way in which we were structured. Everything was turned upside down and everyone here was afraid about what was going to happen. … We all thought we were going to get fired. But of course that was not the case. What he wanted to achieve was functional structures where resources would be moved to places where they would be the most productive. He was interested in productivity and not so much on the camaraderie or the old structures that were in place before he came. (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008)

This is an obvious example of how U.S. American managers are much more willing to change and take risks in order to obtain more results and be much more productive. In this case, they were very different from Bolivians who were much more focused on personal relationships and the social aspect of projects.

On the contrary, the other half or respondents did not think U.S. American managers had a low-uncertainty avoidance culture with a high tolerance for ambiguity. They very practical in this sense, and they knew when there was certainty or uncertainty in the projects. “We Bolivians instead like to disguise uncertainty with dreams. We are big dreamers, we are idealists” (In-depth interview, April 3, 2008). U.S. American managers handled uncertainty with absolute truths. They were willing to make changes easily in order not to fall into any trap. Most of the times U.S. American managers liked to be sure of things in order to avoid uncertainty. A good example of this was:

Whenever there is an issue with a project we [Bolivians] timidly offer solutions to fix the problem even if that means ending up an activity that has not been working out. For us, it is very difficult to take that decision because we have faith and hope that something might change for the better. They [U.S. American managers] instead are much more direct. They make sure they have taken some steps before making the decision and then make it right away. (In-depth interview, April 3, 2008)

Interviewees who disagreed with this aspect, thought that uncertainty was more common to Bolivians than to the U.S. Americans. The majority of Bolivians were used to living their lives on a day-to-day basis, however, U.S. American managers’ culture was is much more structured
and technical. For this reason, they liked to plan things out in advanced so that there was not uncertainty. They did not have a high tolerance for uncertainty.

U.S. Americans managers liked certainty instead, because that is how their culture works. They are used to having more stability in their environment. In this sense, they way in which they dealt with this uncertainty was by preparing exit plans, exit strategies, imaging scenarios, making Bs, having cards under sleeve, and Bolivians were just not used to this. U.S. American managers were always thinking about what hypothetical scenarios. This aspect according to those Bolivians who disagreed with this characteristic had a negative impact on the projects. As an respondent explained:

We follow just because is part of the protocol, but we do not actually follow through with it, because it is not part of our daily lives. Besides we know that we could make plans for scenario A, B, and C and at the moment of truth, they are not going to work in our country. We are used to living our lives thinking short-term, being more spontaneous, more than by having preventive plans. We often feel that we are just wasting time by making all of these plans. In a way, not only do we have to deal with our every day conflicts but also with all of these theoretic scenarios which we do not know if they will happen or not. (In-depth interview, May 8, 2008)

For those participants who thought that U.S. American managers did not have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture saw delays in progress as a negative consequence of this characteristic. The problem that came with U.S. American managers not being tolerant of uncertainty or ambiguity was that they are not that accepting of uncertainties or unexpected situations. This was the case U.S. American donors. They were not understanding of these unexpected situations and thus there were many problems between the donors and the NGOs.

**Question 7: Individualistic Culture of U.S. American Managers**

In total, 77 percent of the interviewees agreed that U.S. American managers have an individualistic culture. However, only two participants disagreed with this because they did not think this was true for U.S. American managers who work in development projects. As one of
them pointed out: “it is difficult to think they are individualist … because they are always worrying about the team with whom they work with. They make a commitment with the people that they are working with” (In-depth interview May 2, 2008). The participant went further to explain his point by explaining that even though U.S. American managers hold master’s degrees and could have been working in the United States and making more money, they still choose to work in Bolivia where they were not able to even live under the same life standards.

Nevertheless, the majority of participants saw this individualistic trait in U.S. American managers. They were found to have their personal goals very clear with their own agenda and plan to achieve these goals, and they had a passion for growing professionally as quick as possible. As one respondent denoted,

> They believe that time is gold and that if they do not take advantage of an opportunity that might come up that then they will automatically stop growing professionally and then they start questioning themselves. Their main goal is always to achieve their personal goals, and maybe that is why they are so independent. (In-depth interview, April 3, 2008)

The participant further illustrated this by explaining an incident that happened within his organization. One of their monitoring and evaluation specialists left his organization and went to a bigger organization, after she had gained all of her monitoring and evaluation experience from his organization. He expressed how unpleasant this experience was since this specialist would have gotten to that same position in just a matter of time. She just needed to wait a little longer. Instead she picked a higher salary over loyalty to the organization. In this case, the interviewee explains how her “priority was to keep growing professionally and reach her professional goals forgetting the commitment she had to the organization” (In-depth interview, April 3, 2008).

Additionally, this individualistic trait was also seen in the way in which U.S. American managers did not socialize with Bolivian managers. It was suggested that this was due to the fact
that U.S. American managers did not want to compromise their work life in any way by mixing it with their personal life. As a respondent explained:

The fact that I am a friend of the director gives me many advantages. I can get to work late. I can take some hours off. I am talking from the Bolivian culture’s perspective. For this reason, the U.S. American managers preferred to remain individualistic. (In-depth interview, May 6, 2008)

In this sense, U.S. American managers were perceived as antisocial. As another respondent added, it was difficult for U.S. American managers to adapt to the Bolivian collectivistic culture because they were not used to this type of family oriented atmosphere. She described how:

There are still parties where not only your whole family comes, but also everyone who works in the office with you. That scares U.S. Americans because they feel that if they go to that party, then they lose their leadership power in the organization. (In-depth interview, May 6, 2008)

According to the majority of interviewees, this individualistic characteristic of U.S. American managers only had negative effects on the procurement and execution process of projects in Bolivia. First, since they were so focused on themselves they rarely stopped to think about why it was that they were doing what they were doing. They barely allowed time for retrospection about their work. This lack of retrospection and communication putted the sustainability of projects at risk.

Furthermore, since U.S. American managers did not hang out outside of work with Bolivian managers they were not able to fully understand their culture. This proved to be detrimental to projects as they were always planning them from an outsider’s perspective. As an interviewee explained, this attitude:

Impeded them from getting a better appreciation of reality, of people’s lives, and it hindered them from having a better knowledge of the communities. In this way, whatever results they obtained, whatever analysis, interventions and observations are not going to be very real and not precise at all because they do not have this level of understanding that can only be obtain by socializing with people. (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008)
Finally, when working on proposals Bolivians managers thought that U.S. American methodologies were inappropriate for Bolivian communities, as they were much more focused on the individuals. This often made projects failed because they were been executed in rural areas where the orientation was collectivistic. In this case, an interviewee denoted the difference between projects’ methodologies depending on the U.S. American donor. For example, USDA gave Bolivian managers a lot of flexibility to propose their own strategies, but USAID told Bolivian managers exactly how they wanted projects to be done. Overall, this individualistic characteristic of U.S. American managers proved to have negatively impacted the procurement and execution process of projects in Bolivia.

**Question 8: Vertical Individualistic Culture of U.S. American Managers**

All interviewees believed that U.S. American managers have this vertical individualistic culture. The idea of accepting inequality and believing that ranks have their privileges was found to be true. As an interviewee explained, although they tried to be as fair and equal as possible, the inequalities were easily seen within the organizations. For instance, when it came to benefits, the U.S. American managers always got more benefits than the Bolivian managers, even if both managers held the same-level position.

U.S. American managers were also found to be achievement oriented. This was obvious in the practice of evaluating staff performance. As denoted by a participant, in Bolivia there is no such thing as staff evaluations, therefore focusing on how many achievements the Bolivian staff had made portrayed this characteristic to its maximum. U.S. American managers preferred those staff members who showed a lot of results and who were very productive. This trait was also evident in the way in which U.S. American managers and U.S. American donors planned projects out. A participant described how:
We see that they are better listeners when we talk about possible achievements, but when it comes to discussing things that are not related to achievements, they do not like to hear it. They are not going to listen about things that might imply questioning the way in which we are executing projects … or the consequences that our actions might bring. They do not listen to this. (In-depth interview, April 4, 2008)

In this sense, U.S. American managers were much more interested on results and achievements rather than on the actual activities or the beneficiaries themselves. Moreover, this vertical individualistic trait was seen in how much U.S. American managers worked to keep their high-level supervising positions. In this way, they were very careful to not make any mistakes that would lead them into losing their jobs. “Since U.S. Americans start their careers from zero and worked very hard to get to those high-ranking positions, they are very careful when it comes to making decisions” (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008).

This vertical individualistic culture of U.S. American managers had both positive and negative effects on projects. The positive effect of this trait was that this vertical individualistic nature allowed Bolivian managers to obtain opportunities for professional development. On the negative side, the problem with this trait was that since U.S. American managers were too focused on results, thus they would often lie about the results of a project in order to appear successful in the eyes of the donors or the organization’s supervisors. As explained by a participant, reports got fixed and sometimes information was accommodated in a way that would seemed like the NGOs obtained lots of results, when in reality this was not true. At the end of the day, this ended up harming projects because Bolivian teams were not working with real facts and decisions were made based on those imaginary notions. This was counterproductive for projects because even budgets, which were exacerbated at the moment of the proposal, were not fully utilized. As a participant expressed, this was a big waste of resources as this money could have been used for a totally different a new project instead.
Question 9: U.S. American Managers’ Leadership Style

All participants found that U.S. American managers have a participatory leadership style. They granted freedom to Bolivian managers to manage their own work individually, they allowed Bolivian managers to empower themselves and to grow professionally, and they were committed to involving people in the decision-making process. “They involve us [Bolivians] in the development of proposals and in the supervision and execution of projects more so than Bolivian managers would do” (In-depth interview, April 3, 2008). This according to one interviewee is one of the U.S. American managers’ greatest assets. Additionally, “they gave us the freedom to make our own decisions, to develop proposals following the international office style. They even gave us freedom in the project’s execution process. They trust in our abilities as an office” (In-depth interview, May 13, 2008). Overall, U.S. American managers highly encouraged participation.

This participatory leadership style is rooted in the U.S. American history. According to one interviewee, long time ago both U.S. American and Bolivian leadership were both authoritarian and vertical. Then, as the economy of the United States started doing well, companies and organizations got bigger and leaders realized that they could not manage everything. It was for this reason that their leadership style became more participatory and horizontal. As she described, this was not the case for Bolivia because their economy did not do well so they ended up with dictatorships and authoritarian leaders.

Bolivian managers also found the U.S. American managers’ leadership style to be extremely organized. “Every person, every unit has their own set of goals, their action plans, and they complement each other well. They respect each other and respect competitiveness and opinions” (In-depth interview, May 13, 2008). Besides being organized their leadership style was also meticulous. As expressed by an interviewee, this was easily seen in their hiring
process. They were very meticulous when hiring new personnel. They were also quick to make a decision and take action to move someone either to a higher position or to just fired them depending on their efficiency at work.

U.S. American participatory leadership style had a positive and a negative impact on development projects in Bolivia. On the positive side, this leadership style was good because it contradicted the Bolivian leadership style, which was more authoritative. This was highly beneficial because things got done faster. As a respondent remarked, if the U.S. American leadership style was not implemented, then there would be many problems in trying to get anything done because the Bolivian leadership style has many issues. As he explained, in Bolivia:

Whatever I needed information for a particular project, instead of getting it directly from whoever had it in order to speed up processes, I had to wait until the leader authorized it. Then, I waited until another leader authorized it too, I did the same process over and over until everyone was finally satisfied. Finally, when I got the information, it was already too late. The deadline had gone by and I did not need it anymore. This process perpetuated bureaucracy. (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008)

As it was clear in this case, U.S. American managers leadership style was more beneficial as they did not required any of these steps in order to pass information around within the organization. Nevertheless, there were some negative aspects about this leadership style as well. The main downside of this trait was apparent when the U.S. American managers granted freedom and trust to the Bolivian staff to do their own work. This did not always work out because the U.S. Americans would give Bolivians just a general outline of what they had to do and then Bolivians would be waiting to receive more details about what it was that they had to do. As explained by a respondent, this created a problem because in one side the U.S. Americans were wondering why their Bolivian counterparts were not turning in their work, and on the other side the Bolivians were wondering what was it that they were supposed to do.
In order to solve this issue, U.S. American managers needed to learn how to determine who could be trusted with independent work and who could not. They needed to learn how to give out more specific and detailed instructions if they wanted to get anything done with Bolivian managers. Additionally, there was another suggestion given to U.S. American managers and it was that they needed to make sure they recognized the efforts of the whole Bolivian staff, not only once the project was finished but also along all the middle steps that helped accomplish them. Also, U.S. American managers were encouraged to recognize that leadership style in Bolivian rural areas and even in the Bolivian offices was more hierarchical. Thus, it was suggested that out of respect, they first needed to learn by looking and analyzing these cultural behaviors before implementing their own leadership style on site.

**Question 10: Short-Time Orientation of U.S. American Managers**

Participants had opposing views regarding U.S. Americans’ time orientation. In total, 67 percent of the interviewees did not think that U.S. American managers had a short-time orientation, and 23 percent disagreed. The majority of participants found U.S. American managers to be more oriented towards the future rather than the past and present. Evidence of this was the fact that they were constantly making plans for the future and they always had a mission and a vision in mind for projects. In addition, “they highly value technology and all that things that are practical” (In-depth interview, May 8, 2008). As one interviewee suggested, this futuristic time orientation could be seen in how they are not attached to their past, to their traditions and to their ancestors. She explained how they do not go through life thinking about the past and how they have a very clear future for themselves and for projects. They are always thinking about ‘what comes next’ in projects. They have a more futuristic outlook of life than the Bolivians who are more focused on their past and present. As remarked by another
respondent “Bolivians face the future backwards; always looking at their past which totally affects how they view time” (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008).

Nonetheless, the only time in which U.S. Americans looked at the past was whenever they were planning for future projects and did not want to make the same mistakes as they have previously done in other projects. They did so in order to make sure that they were being more efficient and effective in the present. They value time tremendously, thus they tried to be as efficient as possible. Additionally, the ‘preservation of face’ trait was found to be true. U.S. American managers were always taking care of their image and their reputation. They worked diligently to preserve their face and this actually had a positive impact on projects, as transparency was highly sought. As denoted by a respondent, U.S. American culture gives a lot of incentives for transparency in projects. Finally, the only negative impact of this U.S. American short-time orientation on projects was the fact that projects were executed within such a short period of time that it did not allow for real changes to occur. According to a participant, in order to get dramatic results and changes, projects need to have more time and should be executed over a long period of time, not doing so, she thought, was just not realistic.

Question 11: Monochronic Time Orientation of U.S. American Managers

None of the interviewees thought that U.S. American managers had a monochronic time orientation, they thought that U.S. American managers were good at doing many things at once and multi-tasking. However, all except one participant saw how U.S. American managers were time-dominated. U.S. American managers were found to worry tremendously about time. Some were even obsessed with it. As an interviewee remarked “there is a tendency to want to get things done now, or urgently, or tomorrow, or yesterday … the famous ‘it was due by yesterday’ phrase” (In-depth interview, April 4, 2008).
A reason for this, as some participants suggested, was the fact that in the United States they live very far from work and the distances are long, therefore this made them conscious and concerned about time. “For that reason, they needed to earn time in the fastest way possible and that is why time is a commodity for them not a benefit. They have to earn it and administer it” (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008). In addition, “they know that tomorrow may never come, so they prefer to do everything today and as fast as possible even if it means that they have to sacrifice themselves in order to gain time” (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008). U.S. American managers thought that time was scarce, and worried about losing time because that would mean losing money. They believed in this notion that time is money.

Nevertheless, when it came to timelines and deadlines for projects, it was clarified that U.S. American managers working in development projects were much more flexible than U.S. American donors such as USAID or USDA. In this sense, it was explained that there were two types of deadlines in the development field. First, there were those internal deadlines set by the NGOs themselves, which tended to be flexible, and then, there were those external deadlines, which were imposed by the U.S. American donors organizations which were very strict.

Another way in which this U.S. American managers’ time-dominated culture was reflected was through salaries. As explained by an interviewee, U.S. American managers were able to tell how much they made an hour, whereas Bolivians never knew how much they made an hour. Bolivian managers instead knew how much they made a month. In this sense, the interviewee believed that U.S. Americans work less than Bolivians. They valued time more than Bolivians do because of the fact that they work based on an hourly-rate.

The positive side of this U.S. American time-dominated culture was that it made projects and processes more efficient and productive, especially in the case of projects which had scarce
resources and which required high levels of productivity. On the contrary, the negative side of this trait was that it often conflicted with the time orientation of the Bolivian culture, both at the national office and at the community level. As a participant remarked, there are many rituals and traditions involved in the Bolivian culture and often U.S. American managers would not have the patience to sit through them. In this regard, they saw it as a waste of time and as being unproductive. By not acknowledging the importance of these rituals to the communities, U.S. American managers were often perceived as disrespectful. It is for this reason that the interviewee suggested that U.S. American managers need to understand that:

Rural Bolivian cultures do not perceive distances or time in the same way as U.S. Americans. So there are still some rural communities where their time orientation is based on annual events such as the sowing and harvest season. Their time orientation is based around these events and thus they do not perceive what August 28 means. (In-depth interview, May 8, 2008)

In this sense, the difference between the time perception between U.S. American managers and Bolivian managers and Bolivian communities caused many conflicts, which were more evident during the project’s execution process. Finally, it is important to remark that only one participant thought that U.S. American managers working in development projects did not have any of these characteristics mentioned above.

**Question 12: Communication between National and International Offices**

All respondents communicate mainly through email but also use chat, Skype, VoIP (Voice-over-Internet protocol), and phone. In regards to digital communication, one respondent pointed out the negative side of communications in this way:

Replying fast via email is being related to being efficient. The faster you answered an email, the more efficient you are … There is not much time to think about stuff, and so many times we respond just to respond quickly. Like the importance of the message is about sending it quickly rather than giving a good answer. (In-depth interview, April 4, 2008)
Despite the negative effects of communicating digitally, half of the respondents said that they communicate with the international office in both Spanish and English, and the other half said that they communicate either in Spanish or English. Only one respondent said that he did not have direct contact with the international office. All the communication he had, went through his boss.

**Question 13: Communication with U.S. American Office: Easy or Challenging?**

Across the board, all Bolivian managers found it easy to communicate with the U.S. American office. This was attributed to the fact that most U.S. Americans working in the international office spoke Spanish and to the fact that most Bolivians had some knowledge of English. Communication is facilitated because U.S. American managers work very closely with the Bolivians managers, according to one interviewee. Overall it is easy to communicate between both offices because both set of managers understand and respect each other. There was only one respondent who shared discontent with the way in which U.S. Americans managers communicate with Bolivian managers. As she recounted, she had to go to the United States to take a course in English, and while she was over there she would often speak in Spanish to her U.S. American colleagues because her English was too technical. This resulted in “a lack of respect from the U.S. Americans. However, once I started communicating in English, I gained their respect” (In-depth interview May 6, 2008). The problem with this, as she expressed, is that: “For [U.S.] Americans who do not have a knowledge of other languages, it is very difficult to understand why not every body speaks their language” (In-depth interview, May 6, 2008).

**Question 14: Language Barrier**

According to all interviewees, the extent to which there was a language barrier with their U.S. American counterparts depended on different factors. For instance, there was no language barrier when some of the U.S. American and Bolivian managers spoke each other’s language.
This was the case of four interviewees’ NGOs. This was also depended on how fluent managers were in each other’s language. For many Bolivians, “language is definitely a barrier especially because it is very difficult for Hispanics to learn English” (In-depth interview, May 6, 2008). Many interviewees pointed out that being able to communicate and understand English did not necessarily mean that they had the ability to write project proposals in English.

Language was definitely an issue when it came to writing project proposals. As one interviewee denoted, even though they did not usually have communication barriers with the U.S. American office, they always had issues when it came to writing proposals. This temporary barrier, as he called it, was exacerbated by the fact that Bolivian manager’s knowledge of English was not very technical and by the fact that the translators who were hired to do this job did not have the adequate knowledge of English either. As he explained, it is difficult to find translators that know the right terminology for specific projects, especially since the jargon used in an educational program is totally different from that used in a health program. Nevertheless, there was another interviewee who said that they had not had any problems with the translators that his organization has hired throughout time.

Moreover, there was another problem with writing proposals and it is the fact that it is just not about translating information but also about understanding the context in which things are being said. As an interviewee remarked:

There have been cases in which we understand a proposal in a certain way and we write it in that level, but then the U.S. team has understood it in a different way. Then we often have to clarify, rewrite parts of the proposal and even adjust it to a level which can be easily understood by the U.S. American donors. Truthfully, things do not mean the same thing for all of us (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008).

Some interviewees overcame this problem by choosing to write proposals in Spanish and then have someone translate it for them into English. Having project proposals written in both languages, benefited both U.S. American and Bolivian managers. In this way, both set of
managers were able to participate in the procurement process. In all, the extent to which there was a language barrier between the U.S. American and Bolivian managers depended upon all of these different aspects.

**Question 15: Overall Impact of Cultural Differences**

All respondents agreed that the U.S. American culture had a substantial impact on development projects in Bolivia. One of the positive effects that it had on the procurement and execution processes was that the U.S. American culture, which is centered around results, helped counterbalance the Bolivian culture, which is centered around personal relationships. As a Bolivian respondent denoted: “that is helpful because we get to combine results with the human aspect, which is important for us” (In-depth interview, may 6, 2008).

Nonetheless, there were a lot of issues that came along in dealing with different cultures. For example, one interviewee pointed out that currently there is an indigenous discourse sweeping across Bolivia, which opposes all that is U.S. American. As she described, there is an Anti-Americanism sentiment that is questioning the role of the U.S. American NGOs in Bolivia. “Now more than ever, there is a discourse about indigenous people as something pure, which I do not believe there is such a thing; but in any case, whatever is not indigenous is not welcomed” (In-depth interview, April 4, 2008). For that reason, she believed that it is important that U.S. American managers leave time and space during work to discuss their actions in the Bolivia and to do some retrospect analysis with the rest of the Bolivian team.

Another problem that came up when dealing with different cultures was that it just took a long time for both teams to understand each other. For instance, when it came to proposal preparation, it took a long time for Bolivians to fully understand what the proposal was, then it took them a long time to write it and finally it took a long time for U.S. American managers to translate it. In all, it just delayed the procurement process of development projects in Bolivia.
Additionally, Bolivian managers found the U.S. American culture to be rude at times. This caused issues, especially during the execution process of projects at the project’s site. As explained by an interviewee, U.S. American managers often did not greet the Bolivian managers and the head of the Bolivian rural communities properly. More so, they did not accept food that was offered to them by the project’s beneficiaries. He pointed out that it is fine to not eat the food if they were concerned about the food’s preparation; however, not even accepting it was described as simply disrespectful. The same was felt by Bolivians once U.S. Americans went directly into business without allowing for the local protocol to take place. In this sense, he suggested that U.S. American managers needed to adapt to the local culture and make sure they asked lots of questions before engaging with them. Not doing so only damaged the U.S. American’s reputation.

Every time U.S. Americans did not pay attention to these cultural differences, the projects failed miserably as stated by the majority of respondents. In this regard, projects ended up being a waste of money, time, efforts and trust in each other’s abilities. As one interviewee pointed out the key for development projects is to have a:

Deep understanding of each other’s culture because the logic is different, the perception of life is different, the perception of time is different, so we cannot pretend that what we think development is, means the same thing to a very traditional community. (In-depth interview, May 8, 2008)

At the end there was hope, as one interviewee remarked: “as long as all of us put the other one’s culture first, then we will be all right and we will continue to progress” (In-depth interview, April 30, 2008). All participants noted, that as long as there was an open line of communication and all of these aspects were discussed then the projects would be successful.
CHAPTER 5
INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

This study analyzed the impact that the Bolivian and U.S. American cultures had on the procurement and execution processes of international development projects in Bolivia. By interviewing nine Bolivian managers and nine U.S. American managers who work on such projects, the author found that differences in the Bolivian and U.S. American culture, communication patterns, management, and leadership style, as well as on their perception of time had both positive and negative impacts in the procurement and execution of development projects in Bolivia. The study of such cultural aspects is critical to the international development field as these differences can determine whether development projects get executed or not. The following five sections explain the impact that each and every one of these aspects had on these processes.

Culture

Culture definitely had an impact on the procurement and execution processes of development projects in Bolivia. When asked about the Bolivian culture, U.S. American managers saw many of the Bolivian characteristics having a negative effect on such processes. In this regard, the most widely discussed trait was time management. According to the majority of interviewees, Bolivian managers did not know how to effectively manage time due to their polychronic time orientation. Because of this, they were not able to prioritize accordingly, which caused a lot of setbacks. This is especially detrimental in the international development field since it involves a variety of continuous deadlines. This made it difficult, and at times impossible for them to turn in project proposals and reports or just meet any deadlines on time.
Some participants even mentioned losing a multimillion-dollar-project proposal due to this factor.

As it was expected, this caused many conflicts between U.S. American and Bolivian managers as they often ended up frustrated with each other. Not only were many of these processes delayed but also some did not even happen. These delays and failures were also attributed to the difference in language and to Bolivian managers’ optimistic nature. As stated by all participants, Bolivian managers’ knowledge of English was more conversational than technical; thus, they were unable to write their own project proposals. Whenever they wrote proposals, they wrote them in Spanish and they tended to be broad and only described the big picture without adding the details requested in such documents. They would also over promise and under deliver. Having proposals written in Spanish caused many delays as Bolivian managers needed to allow time for U.S. American managers to translate them into English. In addition, their positive and optimistic attitude prevented them from letting U.S. American managers know when they were going to be delayed in a process. Bolivian managers hoped for the best; therefore, they always thought that they were going to make it. Furthermore, there were constant challenges because of the political situation in Bolivia along with problems in infrastructure and technology. In addition, differences between international’, donors’, and Bolivian’s standards for development projects, and the Bolivian culture’s acceptance of protests and delays made it tough to get any of these processes done on time.

On the other hand, when asked about the U.S. American culture, Bolivian managers found many traits that also had both negative and positive impacts in the procurement and execution processes of projects in Bolivia. The main U.S. American trait that caused a lot of problems with Bolivians was their direct communication style. This was most evident when both teams were
working on project proposals. When U.S. American managers worked on proposals they made them short, concise, and precise, and when Bolivian managers worked on them, they made them lengthy and elaborate. This contrasting difference caused a lot of frustration between both set of managers, but especially among Bolivian managers since they were the ones who kept being asked to shorten up their work. Many expressed discontent in doing so as they had not only worked assiduously on them, but also because they thought that shortening them up would just leave them incomplete according to their writing style. In all, opposing writing, thinking, and communicating styles delayed processes by making them take a longer time than usual. As some participants suggested, this affected the work environment but not the actual results of the project. Overall, the proposal writing process just proved to be chaotic.

Additionally, there were other factors of the U.S. American culture that negatively impacted the procurement and execution process of development projects in Bolivia. For instance, U.S. American managers clearly separated their professional from their personal lives and this made it difficult for Bolivians to connect with them. It made Bolivian managers perceived them as stuck-up, as if U.S. American managers were trying to position themselves in a higher level than them. This often hindered participation, debate, and challenge from the Bolivian managers about the U.S. Americans decisions and opinions. Moreover, U.S. American managers did not allow time in the organization to discuss the impact of their jobs as a NGO in this historic time in Bolivia. Many interviewees complained about the lack for retrospection of their actions as an organization working in Bolivia, for Bolivians. At last, U.S. American managers’ lack of manners and high respect for Bolivian managers and for project’s beneficiaries damaged their reputation, as they were considered to be rude. This had an obvious detrimental effect on U.S. American managers’ reputation.
Finally, there were some U.S. American traits which Bolivian managers found to have a positive impact on the procurement and execution process of projects in Bolivia. First of all, U.S. American managers who had previously traveled abroad were believed to be more sensitive and open-minded to the cultural differences between Bolivians and themselves. Then, the fact that the U.S. American culture is centered on facts and results complemented well the Bolivian culture, which is more concentrated on the human aspect of projects. Lastly, Bolivians thought that U.S. American managers’ direct communication style was beneficial because it helped them stay on track with project proposals and deadlines, and because it helped them be prepared for the next step in projects, as they were always informed about them.

**Culture and Communication**

Bolivian and U.S. American managers’ communication styles impacted the procurement and execution processes of projects in Bolivia. U.S. American managers thought that Bolivian managers’ indirect communication style stopped them from fully expressing themselves and from reaching their outmost potential. They were not willing or eager to come up with suggestions or participate in discussions. In this way, they were very complaisant of U.S. American manager’s decisions, which is not good for development projects as the locals opinion’s on projects are without a doubt the most valuable ones. This indirect communication style also caused a lot of misunderstandings with U.S. America managers. As described by a participant, “it’s just such a challenge for us to agree on something and to [actually] move forward” (In-depth interview, April 5, 2008). In addition, this indirect communication style also caused many misperceptions among both set of managers. As expressed by another interviewee, Bolivians are seen by U.S. Americans as not able to manage projects properly because they are not constantly communicating with them, and vice versa “Bolivians … see many of the
Americans as been a little bit pushy and rude and unrealistic” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008) because U.S. Americans are being so direct with them.

Now, when it came to Bolivian managers’ communication style during meetings, U.S. American managers complained about Bolivian managers talking in circles for quite some time before actually getting to the point of the meeting. In this sense, some U.S. managers felt that they had to keep bringing Bolivian managers back to the point in order to get things going and they also felt that they had to keep asking the same questions over and over before actually getting an answer to them. Furthermore, U.S. American managers did not have a problem with language during meetings as communications were either in Spanish or in English. As all U.S. American interviewees stated, this was not a problem as they were all fluent in Spanish. The only problem they did seem to have during communications was getting responses form them through email and working on project proposals.

The communication issue with project proposals was that most Bolivian managers would write the proposal in Spanish and then the U.S. American managers had to translate them in English. The problem with this is that it delayed the procurement process a lot. As a respondent mentioned, it is not just about translating, but also expressing ideas right depending on the context, which in general just took a long time. Above all, U.S. American managers found that the procurement and execution processes were negatively affected because Bolivians did not have a high knowledge of English. Therefore they did not only have problems in writing proposals and reports, but also missed great professional development activities in the United States’ offices.

On the other hand, Bolivian managers reaffirmed that U.S. American managers have a direct communication style. This trait had both positive and negative effects on the procurement
and execution process of development projects in Bolivia. Some of the positive included the fact that this direct communication style was found helpful by Bolivian managers as orders, projects, and plans were clear. There was never a doubt on what to do, and thus people were more productive and efficient. This was particularly beneficial during project proposal preparation. It helped Bolivian managers have their own project proposal’s goals clear in their heads and in their writing. The same positive effect was seen during meetings, which always ended up being very fast and efficient. This trait of always wanting to be productive and efficient was attributed in part, to the fact that U.S. American managers knew how to separate well their personal from their professional life.

Nonetheless, this direct communication style of U.S. American managers had many negative effects in the procurement and execution processes of projects in Bolivia. For example, when writing proposals, Bolivian managers felt frustrated as they were always asked to shorten up the narrative and think more from a Western point of view. There were many issues with this. First of all, by asking them to shorten up the narrative, it delayed the procurement process and made Bolivian managers do double the work, as expressed by most participants. This is particularly difficult and almost impossible because they would usually write proposals in Spanish. Writing and communicating in Spanish has its own rules and its own way of thinking; thus, it was very complicated and challenging for Bolivian managers to think in a different mindset. In this case, it has to do with two different languages and two different ways of thinking.

This direct communication style also limited U.S. American managers from noticing and understanding other types of communication styles, such as non-verbal, body, and implicit language, which caused them to be perceived as rude and disrespectful. As some interviewees
commented, even when greeting or during meetings, U. S. American managers would forget to stand up or to greet everyone, or to go to an issue directly during a meeting without having a small talk at the beginning, which were all regarded as bad manners by the Bolivian managers. As described by a participant, some U.S. American managers would leave a meeting at the end of it without saying goodbye to everyone. They were also considered very rude when in the middle of a meeting or a conversation with Bolivian managers they would break up and start speaking in English with each other. This was obviously seen as disrespectful as it cut the flow of meetings and it made Bolivian managers feel awkward. What is more, this indirect communication style also made them seem blunt. This was predominantly the case when they had to give criticisms to Bolivian managers. Criticisms were always given in a bluntly and sharply without having much regard of how Bolivian managers might receive the message. In most occasions, Bolivian managers felt offended as they felt that U.S. American managers had harmed their feelings.

Because of all the issues mentioned above, this direct communication style hindered the Bolivian managers from participating, debating, discussing and giving suggestions during the procurement and execution process or projects. As a participant remarked, this had a tremendous damage on projects since it limits creativity. The other problem too is that Bolivian managers and the communities in which they are working do not often buy into the ideas of these programs because they are not included from the beginning in the procurement process. The fact that U.S. American managers do not seek involvement from the communities and the Bolivian managers from the beginning endangers the sustainability of projects.

Another issue that came with this direct communication style was that it showed how U.S. American managers did not put their “heart into business.” They were so direct and so focused
on facts and figures that they often forgot about the human side of projects. This caused them sometimes to determine that a project had failed, when in reality, or at least in the Bolivian’s reality it was successful. This was also seen in the fact that they do not take time out of their busy schedules to analyze and question their actions. As many Bolivian managers suggested, there was never time for retrospection, which they believed is critical, especially during Bolivia’s current moment in history. This direct communication style led them to be perceived as too technical, too mechanical, and cold by Bolivian managers. Lastly, Bolivians found it easy to communicate with U.S. American managers as all of them spoke Spanish, and as most Bolivian managers had some knowledge of English. Only during proposal preparation both set of managers thought that communication was challenging.

**Culture and Management**

The fact that Bolivian and U.S. American managers had opposing management styles had a substantial impact on the procurement and execution process of development projects in Bolivia. First of all, U.S. American managers found Bolivian managers to be complaisant with them. They had such a high-power distance culture that they rarely challenged or questioned U.S. American managers and their decisions. U.S. American managers observed that Bolivian managers had this “mi jefe me dijo” (my boss told me) mindset. For instance, in most cases nothing could get done in the Bolivian offices unless it had the approval of the director. Requested information had to go through the supervisors before it was handed down to the person that actually needed it. This trait caused many problems. It created bottlenecks, it slowed processes down to the point that often they did not get done on time, processes and projects did not run smoothly and were not as efficient and productive as they could have been. Additionally, the lack of organization trust due to this high-power distance culture, which respects hierarchy tremendously, inhibited participation.
Another trait of the Bolivian manager that impacted projects was their high-uncertainty avoidance culture with a low-tolerance for ambiguity. This trait had a negative impact on projects as it caused Bolivians to spend an excessive amount of time in making sure they secure they had carefully devised plans and projects that did not encouraged corruption. Though, avoiding corruption to the maximum was good for projects, the fact that they spend so much time worrying about it negatively affected projects overall, as mentioned by an interviewee. This definitely caused a lot of frustration among U.S. American managers. However, this trait allowed them to be able to work under any circumstance because they were used to so much uncertainties in life.

Furthermore, Bolivian managers’ collectivistic nature proved to be beneficial for projects. This collectivistic culture led to long-term employment through which staff members showed a lot of loyalty to the organization. This in turn was favorable to projects because long-term relationships were created and therefore a family-like atmosphere was evident not only in the organizations Bolivian’ office, but also with the actual projects’ beneficiaries. This certainly helped projects be successful. The only problem with this was that Bolivian managers tended to watch for each other’s back and thus it was difficult to hold people accountable for their actions.

On the contrary, U.S. American managers had a very different management style. Bolivian managers found U.S. Americans to have a low-power distance culture which was egalitarian and which gave everyone the right to speak up and to give ideas and suggestions. They always sought participation and this made processes run smoothly. Bolivian managers and communities felt empowered as they were able to speak up and debate or challenge U.S. American managers. This in turn helped projects to succeed and be sustainable as people felt part of the project from the beginning. This U.S. American managers’ characteristic was good
because it prevented the abuse of power. The downside of this trait, however, was that by allowing everyone to participate in the decision-making process it made it difficult to take corrective measures once something had gone wrong in the projects.

U.S. America managers were also found to have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture with a high-tolerance for ambiguity, which helped them remained calm most of the time. This trait allowed them to make any changes and to take any risks in order to be more effective and productive in projects. They handled uncertainty with absolute truths therefore they were willing to make any changes to projects in order not to fall in to a trap. The positive side of this was that they were ready to face uncertainties because they had exit strategies and “Plan Bs” already planned out. The negative, though, as Bolivian managers saw it, was that they wasted time by making all those plans that in reality were never used.

Finally, U.S. American managers were found to have an individualistic culture. This trait had a negative impact on projects. Since U.S. American managers tended to be so focused on their own personal goals, they usually forgot about doing the best for everyone’s benefit and often failed to question themselves about their actions in projects. This individualistic nature also caused them not to be able to socialize well with Bolivian managers. This proved to have a detrimental impact on projects, as they never got to fully understand the Bolivian culture. As expressed by a participant, this attitude

Impedes them from getting a better appreciation of reality, of people’s lives, and hinders them from having a better knowledge of communities. In this way, whatever results they obtain, analysis, interventions and observations are not going to be very real and not precise at all, because they do not have this level of understanding that can only be obtain by socializing with people. (In-depth interview, April 15, 2008)

As stated, this individualistic trait could endanger the sustainability of projects. Lastly, the fact that this trait made them so focused in results, usually made them overlook the overall human-impact that the project had on the actual communities. This was also damaging to
projects, as U.S. American managers would sometimes lie in reports, in order to look good in front of donors. In all, they just based project’s success on facts and figures.

**Culture and Leadership**

Differences in leadership styles between Bolivian and U.S. American managers affected the procurement and execution processes of projects in Bolivia in good and in bad manners. First, the U.S. American managers saw how the Bolivian leadership style was nepotistic. This was found to be both positive and negative. As one interviewee believed nepotism is good because “you can trust people with whom you have these other linkages with, because you know them, and they will not necessarily violate your trust because of these other strong ties” (In-depth interview, May 2, 2008). He also believed that nepotism in Bolivia not only reinforced their collectivistic nature, but also prevented people from not fulfilling their duty as they had a lot of social pressure to do their job well.

On the contrary, some U.S. American managers saw how this negatively impacted projects. They found this nepotistic leadership to be manipulative, to the point that even if someone were to leave the organization, they would still need to be loyal to it. This also affected the efficiency of the procurement and execution processes of projects in Bolivia because “rather than … taking everyone out in their merits and assigning roles and responsibilities based on that, sometimes things are assigned based on who is loyal, rather than who is really competent to do the job” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008). It is important to remark however, that nepotism was found in the private and public sector but not in the non-profit sector.

Bolivian managers on the other hand, thought the U.S. American managers’ leadership style was positive to projects as it encouraged Bolivians to participate in both the procurement and execution processes of projects. They gave the opportunity to Bolivian managers to be empowered and to grow professionally. They involved Bolivian managers in the decision-
making process and thus everyone won as everyone was on the same page in regards to the projects. Bolivian managers also benefited from this as U.S. American managers gave them a lot of responsibilities and freedom to do their job, which in turn gave them a chance to prove themselves. When Bolivian managers were successful at doing so, then both the individual and the organization had a win-win situation. Moreover, this leadership is a good balance to the strict Bolivian leadership style. The only negative side of U.S. American leadership style is that giving too much freedom to Bolivian managers sometimes proved to be counterproductive. As explained by some respondents, Bolivian managers need a lot of guidance in what they have to do, and U.S. American managers only give the general idea of what they have to do. This in many instances caused both parties to be frustrated with each other because U.S. American managers thought that there was progress being made in certain tasks, and Bolivian managers were just waiting for U.S. American managers to give them more instructions.

**Culture and Time Orientation**

Bolivian and U.S. American time orientation proved to have both positive and negative impacts in the procurement and execution processes of projects in Bolivia. First, U.S. American managers found Bolivian managers to have a relaxed time orientation. They lacked punctuality and they were not responsible in this sense. According to one interviewee this caused a lot frustration among U.S. American managers because “it is not just about been late for things, but completely changing them without paying attention to the fact that there are other people involved and that they need to be notified” (In-depth interview, May 28, 2008). U.S. American managers definitely noticed the “mañana behavior” in Bolivian managers and discussed how this negatively affected projects as it caused many deadlines to be missed. Many respondents explained how they lost projects because they were not able to submit proposals on time. It was concluded that the Bolivian culture is just not a way of life ruled by deadlines or timelines.
Additionally, U.S. American managers found that Bolivian managers had a polychronic time orientation and thus they were able to do many things at once. This trait proved to be counterproductive for projects as Bolivian managers were not able to prioritize accordingly because they just have too many things going on at once. This trait was evident during meetings where Bolivian managers would allow interruptions to go on throughout the whole meeting. This trait slowed and delayed processes down. It frustrated U.S. American manager as they just saw it as a waste of time. Nonetheless, when given a long period of time, Bolivian managers were able to meet all the deadlines on time and they worked effectively and efficiently. In this case, this time orientation did not seem counterproductive. Bolivian managers’ long-time orientation made them look projects not only from the past and present point of view, but also in the future. They were always thinking on how to make them sustainable on the long run.

Now, U.S. American managers’ time orientation was definitely geared towards the future. They only looked at the past in order not to make the same mistakes they have previously done in other projects. Obviously this had a good impact on projects. Bolivian managers found U.S. American managers to be focused on being efficient and productive; thus, whenever they focused on a task they would carry it out perfectly. This obsession with being efficient and productive was considerably beneficial when resources in a project were scarce. In this case, U.S. American managers managed to get the best results from whatever they had at hand. Another positive effect was that U.S. American managers were interested in preserving their face or keeping their reputation, therefore transparency was encouraged and corruption was diminished. The U.S. American culture was found to give a lot of incentives for transparency in projects.
On the negative side, this U.S. American short-time orientation did not allow projects’ success to be evaluated on the long run, and thus often projects would seem as if they have failed when in reality this was not the case. As a respondent remarked, projects are executed within such a short-time period that no time is allowed for real changes to occur. Finally, U.S. American managers need to avoid applying their time orientation to Bolivian managers and Bolivian communities as it only proves to be damaging to projects. This was predominantly the case when working with rural communities that have a lot of rituals and protocols before starting a project. Since U.S. American managers have a short-time orientation they saw this as a waste of time. In order to have sustainable projects, U.S. Americans need to work under the Bolivian communities’ time orientation.

**Answer to Research Questions**

The findings of this study offer evidence that the Bolivian and the U.S. American managers’ cultural differences in communication patterns, management and leadership styles, as well as on their time perception had both positive and negative impacts in the procurement and execution processes of development projects in Bolivia.

**Proposed solutions**

After finding out how culture, communication patterns, management and leadership styles, and time orientation of Bolivian and U.S. American managers positively and negatively impacted the procurement and execution processes of development projects in Bolivia, the author decided to make suggestions on how each set of managers could tackle each and everyone of the aspects that caused problems. The following figures are a representation of each of the problems faced under each of the different culture aspects mentioned above, along with their suggested solution right next to it. There are five figures for U.S. American managers on how to
deal with the Bolivian managers’ culture. In the same way, there are five figures for Bolivian
managers dealing with the U.S. American manager’s culture.

The first five figures at the end of this chapter illustrate suggestions for the U.S. American
managers on how to deal with conflicting cultural characteristics with the Bolivian managers.
Figure 5-1 shows some suggestions on how U.S. Americans managers should deal with the
Bolivian managers’ culture; Figure 5-2 on how to deal with Bolivian managers’ communication
pattern; Figure 5-3 on how to deal with Bolivian managers’ management style; Figure 5-4 on
how to deal with Bolivian managers’ leadership style; and Figure 5-5 on how to deal with their
time orientation.

The second five figures at the end of this chapter illustrate suggestions for the Bolivian
managers on how to deal with conflicting cultural traits with the U.S. American managers.
Figure 5-6 shows some suggestions on how Bolivian managers should deal with the U.S.
American managers’ culture; Figure 5-7 on how to deal with U.S. American managers’
communication pattern; Figure 5-8 on how to deal with U.S. American managers’ management
style; Figure 5-9 on how to deal with U.S. American managers’ leadership style; and Figure 5-10
on how to deal with their time orientation.

**Future Research**

Future studies should explore the impact of cultural aspects such as communication
patterns, management and leadership styles, as well as time perception in the procurement and
execution processes of projects being carried out by the Bolivian public and private sector along
with U.S. American counterparts. Additionally, other studies should focus on the impact of all
of these cultural aspects in the procurement and execution processes of development projects in
other Latin American countries.
Future research should look at the uncertainty avoidance aspect as it caused confusion among participants. Perhaps the definition of uncertainty avoidance should be redefined and low-uncertainty avoidance should be equivalent to high-tolerance for ambiguity and high-uncertainty avoidance should be equivalent to low-tolerance for ambiguity. In the same way, the concept of vertical –individualistic and –collectivistic nature and the horizontal –individualistic and –collectivistic nature should be further analyzed. These concepts may also have to be redefined. Furthermore, future studies should take into account the cultural diversity of the researcher. In the case of this study, the researcher was both U.S. American and South American, which could have influenced the responses of the participants in some way. At the end, this could have been both a limitation and an advantage to the study.

**Conclusion**

After reviewing the literature on how culture affects the way people think, communicate, and act, and after the author’s experience in seeing how some international development projects failed because of problems caused by such cultural differences, this study was aimed to determine which cultural aspects produced these issues and attempted to give some solutions for them. This study then proved evidence that the Bolivian and the U.S. American managers’ cultural differences in communication patterns, management and leadership styles, and on their time perception had positive and negative impacts on the procurement and execution processes of development projects in Bolivia.

In order to avoid issues that come along with these cultural differences NGOs, Bolivian and U.S. American managers should consider the suggested solutions for such problems. U.S. American managers in particular should reconsider the timelines and deadlines given to the Bolivian managers and to the Bolivian communities, as they were often unrealistic and detached from the Bolivian reality. U.S. American funding institutions are also highly encouraged to
make this adjustment in both the procurement and execution process of development projects in Bolivia in order to obtain better results in projects, which would eventually make them last longer and become more sustainable.

Although, having a cultural training in both the Bolivian and U.S. American offices would be the ideal strategy to overcome these problems, this study made a contribution to the field, as it first identified what the problem was. Identifying the problem is always the first step towards fixing it. As expressed by all interviewees, this study was beneficial to them, as they never had time within their organizations and in the development field to talk about these cultural issues, which often prove to be detrimental to development projects.
Figure 5-1. Bolivian managers’s culture: suggestions for U.S. American managers on how to deal with it
Figure 5-2. Bolivian manager’s communication style: suggestions for U.S. American managers on how to deal with it
Figure 5-3. Bolivian’s management style: suggestions for U.S. American managers on how to deal with it
Figure 5-4. Bolivian managers’ leadership style: suggestions for U.S. American managers on how to deal with it

- **Nepotistic behavior**
  - **Suggested solution:** Promote and recognize the value of accomplishments, merits, and abilities of staff members
  - **Legend:** 
    - Issues
    - Suggested solutions

Procurement and execution process of development projects

Figure 5-5. Bolivia manager’s time orientation: suggestions for U.S. American managers on how to deal with it

- **Lack of punctuality**
  - **Suggested solution:** Give incentives for people to be punctual

- **“Mañana behavior”**
  - **Suggested solution:** Emphasize the importance of deadlines in order to get funds for projects to benefit lots of people

- **Polychronic behavior**
  - **Suggested solution:** Teach Bolivians how to prioritize

Procurement and execution process of development projects

Legend:
- Issues
- Suggested solutions
Figure 5-6. U.S. American managers’ culture: suggestions for Bolivian managers on how to deal with it

Legend:
- **Issues**
- **Suggested solutions**
Figure 5-7. U.S. American managers’s communication style: suggestions for Bolivian managers on how to deal with it
Figure 5-8. U.S. American manager’s management style: suggestions for Bolivian managers on how to deal with it.
Figure 5-9. U.S. Americans managers’ leadership style: suggestions for Bolivian managers on how to deal with it

Legend:

Issues

Suggested solutions

Culture & leadership

Freedom to people to work independently

Ask for detailed instructions on what to do and make sure to clarify any discrepancies

Procurement and execution process of development projects

Figure 5-10. U.S. Americans managers’ time orientation: suggestions for Bolivian managers on how to deal with it

Legend:

Issues

Suggested solutions

Culture & time orientation

Short-time orientation

Ask U.S. American managers to give more time during projects to see real changes

Remind U.S. Americans not to impose their time orientation on Bolivian communities, as theirs is different

Teach U.S. American about Bolivian cultures, rituals, and protocols

Procurement and execution process of development projects
APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR U.S. AMERICAN MANAGERS

[I am going to read the following questions in order to have consistency throughout my interviews].

(The following are my abbreviations: C – culture, CC – culture and communication, CM – culture and management, CL – culture and leadership, CTO – culture and time orientation)

The questions that I am about to ask are mainly related to how culture influences the procurement process of development projects in Bolivia. There are going to be different sets of questions and the first one is about the Bolivian culture.

1. **C:** It is said by scholars that the Bolivian culture is multi-active, meaning that they share the following traits: gregarious, plans grand outline only, does several things at once, not punctual, timetable unpredictable, changes plans, juggles facts, people-oriented, gets around all departments, pulls strings, seeks favors, delegates to relations, talks for hours, rarely writes memos, seeks out (top) key person, has ready excuses, unrestricted body language, interrupts frequently and interweaves social/personal. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with Bolivian managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

The next set of questions is about how the Bolivian culture influences their communication style.

2. **CC:** Scholars have found that Bolivians have a high-context culture. What this means is that information and rules are implicit, that they draw upon intuition and have an indirect communication style, that they tend to be extremely reserved, with much being taken for granted and assumed to be shared, thus permitting an emphasis on understatement and nonverbal codes. In other words, that the meaning of things is more often implied and they varied depending on situations. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with Bolivian managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

3. **CC:** It is also said that when Bolivians communicate they begin with a small talk, and expect the listeners to acknowledge, recognize and respect their national honor. Then they move to random proposals and finally they reach an agreement, which they do not often fulfill (or at least not in the desired time matter). In general, do think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with Bolivian managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

4. **CC:** Now, when it comes to communicating during a meeting, Bolivians are believed to do a small talk before the meeting, then they proceed to discuss important topics randomly, and finally after discussing all the possible issues they will reach to a
conclusion. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with Bolivian managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

The next set of questions is about how Bolivian culture influences their managerial style.

5. **CM:** The first aspect about management that will be explored is Power Distance. It refers to the extent to which a society accepts the fact that power in institutions is distributed unequally and also to the appropriateness or importance of status differences and social hierarchies. It is assumed that Bolivians have a high power distance culture and thus they accept a particular social order or hierarchy. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with Bolivian managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

6. **CM:** The next aspect about management that will be explored is Uncertainty Avoidance. It refers to the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations by providing greater career stability, establishing more formal rules, not tolerating deviant ideas and behaviors, and believing in absolute truths and the attainment of experience. Bolivians are believed to have a high uncertainty avoidance culture, which demand consensus and do not tolerate dissent…in the behaviors of members. Rather, they try to ensure certainty and security through…rules, regulations and rituals; they…have higher levels of anxiety as well as intolerance for ambiguity. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with Bolivian managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

7. **CM:** The next aspect about management that will be explored is Individualism-Collectivism. Bolivians are believed to be a collectivistic culture, which means that they require an absolute loyalty to the group, and groups to which a person belongs are the most important social units. They see themselves as parts of one or more collectives (family, co-workers, tribe, nation); are primarily motivated by the norms of, and duties imposed by, those collectives; and are willing to give priority to the goals of these collectives over their own personal goals. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with Bolivian managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

8. **CM:** Bolivians are believed to have a vertical collectivistic culture. This means that they have a sense of serving the ingroup and sacrificing for the benefit of the ingroup and doing one’s duty, and it also means that they accept inequality and believe that ranks
have their privileges while still maintaining their collectivistic nature. In a sense, they tend to be dutiful. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with Bolivian managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

The next set of questions is about how the Bolivian culture influences their leadership style.

9. **CL:** Leadership in Bolivia is believed to be characterized by nepotism, where staff is manipulated by a variety of persuasive methods ranging from (benign) paternalism to outright exploitation and coercion. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with Bolivian managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

The next set of questions is about the difference in time orientation of the Bolivian culture.

10. **CTO:** Bolivian culture is believed to have long-time orientation, meaning that the fostering of virtues orientated towards future rewards, in particular perseverance and thrift. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with Bolivian managers?
    a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
    b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
    c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

11. **CTO:** Bolivians are also classified polychronic, meaning that they enjoy doing many things at once. Additionally, they are devoid of the mañana behavior and are characterized for not been interested in schedules or punctuality. They consider the present reality to be more important than appointments. In other words, they believe that time is an event- or personality-related, a subjective commodity which can be manipulated, molded, stretched, or dispensed with, irrespective of what the clock says. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with Bolivian managers?
    a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
    b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
    c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

The next sets of questions are just some general questions.

12. **CC:** How do you usually communicate with the international office?
13. **CC:** How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?
14. **CC:** Do you feel there is a language barrier with your Bolivian co-manager? [Keep the outcomes of successful proposals in mind]
15. Above all, how do you think that these cultural differences impact the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Finally, the last questions are on demographics.
16. How old are you?
17. What do you consider as your ethnic background?
18. What is your native language?
19. Do you speak any other languages? If so, which ones?
20. What is your educational and work experience?
APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BOLIVIAN MANAGERS

English Version

[I am going to read the following questions in order to have consistency throughout my interviews].

(The following are my abbreviations: C – culture, CC – culture and communication, CM – culture and management, CL – culture and leadership, CTO – culture and time orientation)

The questions that I am about to ask are mainly related to how culture influences the procurement process of development projects in Bolivia. There are going to be different sets of questions and the first one is about the U.S. American culture.

1. C: It is said by scholars that the U.S. American culture is linear-active, meaning that they share the following traits: introvert, patient, quiet, minds own business, likes privacy, plans ahead methodically, does one thing at a time, works fixed hours, punctual, dominated by timetables and schedules, sticks to plans, sticks to facts, job-oriented, unemotional, works within the department, follows procedures, likes fixed agendas, brief on telephone, uses memoranda, limited body language, rarely interrupts, and separates social/professional. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with U.S. American managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

The next set of questions is about how the U.S. American culture influences their communication style.

2. CC: Scholars have found that U.S. Americans have a low-context culture. What this means is that information and rules are vested in the explicit code, meaning is explicit and dependent on verbal codes and group memberships change rapidly with individualism being valued. In other words, they have a direct style of communication. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with U.S. American managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

3. CC: It is also said that when U.S. Americans communicate they are direct, concise, and quick. This is due to their open and truthful nature of their intentions. Additionally, they do not put their heart on business. In general, do think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with U.S. American managers?
   a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
   b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
   c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

4. CC: Now, when it comes to communicating during a meeting, U.S. Americans are believed to start with minimal talk, then go to specific points one by one, followed by a
brief discussion of each point, until a conclusion is reached. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with U.S. American managers?

a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

The next set of questions is about how the U.S. American culture influences their managerial style.

5. CM: The first aspect about management that will be explored is Power Distance. It refers to the extent to which a society accepts the fact that power in institutions is distributed unequally and also to the appropriateness or importance of status differences and social hierarchies. It is assumed that U.S. Americans have a low power distance culture and thus they believe in the importance of social equality. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with U.S. American managers?

a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

6. CM: The next aspect about management that will be explored is Uncertainty Avoidance. It refers to the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations by providing greater career stability, establishing more formal rules, not tolerating deviant ideas and behaviors, and believing in absolute truths and the attainment of experience. U.S. Americans are believed to have a low uncertainty avoidance culture, through which live day-to-day, regarding the uncertainties of life as natural, and they are more willing to accept change and take risks. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with U.S. American managers?

a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

7. CM: The next aspect about management that will be explored is Individualism-Collectivism. U.S. Americans are believed to be an individualistic culture, which means that the autonomy of the individual is paramount, with personal motivation and personal goals taking precedence over group or collective concerns or interests. They view themselves as independent of the collectives; primarily motivated by their own preferences, needs, rights; giving priority to their personal goals over the goals of others; and emphasizing rational analyses of the advantages and disadvantages to associating with others. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with U.S. American managers?

a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?
b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.
c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

8. CM: U.S. Americans are believed to have a vertical individualistic culture. This means that they have a sense of serving the ingroup and sacrificing for the benefit of the ingroup
and doing one’s duty, and it also means that they accept inequality and believe that ranks have their privileges while still maintaining their individualistic nature. They tend to be achievement oriented. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with U.S. American managers?

a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?

b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.

c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

The next set of questions is about how the U.S. American culture influences their leadership style.

9. CL: Leadership in the United States is believed to be characterized by involvement-oriented style, centering on employee commitment and empowerment. It assumes that the best way to organize is to give workers freedom and responsibility to manage their work as much as possible. Leaders concentrate on developing workers and encouraging them to become involved and take responsibility for their own performance. Leaders and managers have become the coaches for team building and enthusiasm among their employees. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with U.S. American managers?

a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?

b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.

c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

The next set of questions is about the difference in time orientation of the U.S. American culture.

10. CTO: U.S. American culture is believed to have short-time orientation, meaning that they foster virtues related to the past and present, in particular respect for tradition, preservation of ‘face’ and fulfilling social orientation. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with U.S. American managers?

a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?

b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.

c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

11. CTO: U.S. Americans are also classified monochronic, meaning that they are careful in doing things one at a time. They concentrate on it, and do it on a fixed schedule. Additionally, they are time-dominated and always appear to be impatient and in a hurry. U.S. Americans truly believe that time is money. Time is precious, even scarce, commodity. It flows fast. U.S. Americans are people of action and thus cannot be idle. They talk about wasting, spending, budgeting and saving time. In general, do you think this is true? Have you seen any of these traits when dealing with U.S. American managers?

a. Could you name some of the ones that you have seen?

b. Do you think these affect the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia? Please explain.

c. Could you give me an example? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]

The next sets of questions are just some general questions.

12. CC: How do you usually communicate with the international office?
13. CC: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?
14. CC: Do you feel there is a language barrier with your U.S. American co-manager? [If an example is provided, ask for another one]
15. Above all, how do you think that these cultural differences impact the procurement process and execution of development projects in Bolivia?
    Finally, the last questions are on demographics.
16. How old are you?
17. What do you consider as your ethnic background?
18. What is your native language?
19. Do you speak any other languages? If so, which ones?
20. What is your educational and work experience?
Spanish Version

[Voy a leer las siguientes preguntas para tener un nivel de consistencia en las entrevistas que realizaré].

Las preguntas que le voy a realizar son en gran parte acerca de cómo la cultura afecta al proceso de desarrollo de las propuestas para proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia. Van a haber diferentes conjuntos de preguntas y la primera es acerca de la cultura de los Estados Unidos.

1. C: Algunos expertos dicen que la cultura estadounidense es activa lineal, lo que significa que ellos comparten las siguientes características: introvertidos, pacientes, callados, se preocupan solo por sus problemas, les gusta la privacidad, planean metodológicamente con antelación, hacen solo una cosa a la vez, trabajan horarios fijos, son puntuales, están dominados por los horarios, siguen los planes al pie de la letra, se basan en los hechos solamente, están orientados al trabajos, y no son muy emotivos, trabajan dentro de su departamento solamente, siguen instrucciones, les gustan el orden del día, son breves en el teléfono, usan memorándums, su expresión corporal es limitada, casi nunca interrumpen, y separan muy bien la vida social y la profesional. En general, ¿usted cree que esto es verdad? ¿Ha visto usted alguna de estas características en los directores/ supervisores estadounidenses?
   a. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las que ha observado?
   b. ¿Usted cree que alguna de estas características afecta al proceso de desarrollo de propuestas y a la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia? Por favor explique.
   c. ¿Me podría dar un ejemplo? [si ya me han dado un ejemplo entonces preguntar por otro]

El próximo conjunto de preguntas es acerca de cómo la cultura de los estadounidenses influye su estilo de comunicación.

2. CC: Expertos dicen que la cultura estadounidense es una cultura de bajo-contexto. Esto significa que la información y las reglas son explícitas, el significado de la cosas es explícito, son dependientes de los códigos verbales y la membresía a grupos cambia rápidamente en base a los valores del individualismo. En otras palabras, ellos tienen un estilo de comunicación directo. En general, ¿usted cree que esto es verdad? ¿Ha visto usted alguna de estas características en los directores/ supervisores estadounidenses?
   a. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las que ha observado?
   b. ¿Usted cree que alguna de estas características afecta al proceso de desarrollo de propuestas y a la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia? Por favor explique.
   c. ¿Me podría dar un ejemplo? [si ya me han dado un ejemplo entonces preguntar por otro]

3. CC: También se dice que cuando los estadounidenses se comunican son directos, concisos y precisos. Esto se debe a su naturaleza abierta y veraz de sus intenciones. Adicionalmente, ellos no ponen el corazón en los negocios. En general, ¿usted cree que esto es verdad? ¿Ha visto usted alguna de estas características en los directores/ supervisores estadounidenses?
   a. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las que ha observado?
   b. ¿Usted cree que alguna de estas características afecta al proceso de desarrollo de propuestas y a la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia? Por favor explique.
c. ¿Me podría dar un ejemplo? [si ya me han dado un ejemplo entonces preguntar por otro]

4. **CC:** Ahora, cuando se refiere al estilo de comunicación durante una reunión, los estadounidenses usualmente empiezan con una conversación corta, después van a los puntos importantes uno por uno, luego tienen una breve discusión de cada punto hasta que llegan a una conclusión. En general, ¿usted cree que esto es verdad? ¿Ha visto usted algunas de estas características en los directores/supervisores estadounidenses?
   a. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las que ha observado?
   b. ¿Usted cree que alguna de estas características afecta al proceso de desarrollo de propuestas y a la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia? Por favor explique.
   c. ¿Me podría dar un ejemplo? [si ya me han dado un ejemplo entonces preguntar por otro]

El próximo conjunto de preguntas es acerca de cómo la cultura de los Estados Unidos influye en el estilo de supervisión.

5. **CM:** El primer aspecto del estilo de supervisión que será explorado es la Distancia del Poder. Esto se refiere al grado a la cual la sociedad acepta el hecho que el poder en las instituciones esta distribuido desequilibradamente y también se refiere a cuan apropiado o importante es la diferencia en estatus y jerarquías sociales. Se asume que en los Estados Unidos la distancia del poder es baja y que por ello creen que la igualdad social es muy importante. En general, ¿usted cree que esto es verdad? ¿Ha visto usted algunas de estas características en los directores/supervisores estadounidenses?
   a. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las que ha observado?
   b. ¿Usted cree que alguna de estas características afecta al proceso de desarrollo de propuestas y a la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia? Por favor explique.
   c. ¿Me podría dar un ejemplo? [si ya me han dado un ejemplo entonces preguntar por otro]

6. **CM:** El próximo aspecto sobre el estilo de supervisión que será explorado es la evasión de incertidumbre. Esto se refiere al grado en que la sociedad se siente amenazada por la incertidumbre y la situaciones ambiguas por lo cual proveen más estabilidad de carreras, establecen más reglas formales, no toleran ni ideas ni comportamiento irregulares y creen en verdades absolutas y en la obtención de experiencia. En este caso se dice que la cultura de los estadounidenses tiene un nivel bajo de evasión de incertidumbre, mediante el cual viven día a día, tomando las incertidumbres de la vida como algo natural, y están más dispuestos a aceptar cambio a tomar riesgos. En general, ¿usted cree que esto es verdad? ¿Ha visto usted algunas de estas características en los directores/supervisores estadounidenses?
   a. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las que ha observado?
   b. ¿Usted cree que alguna de estas características afecta al proceso de desarrollo de propuestas y a la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia? Por favor explique.
   c. ¿Me podría dar un ejemplo? [si ya me han dado un ejemplo entonces preguntar por otro]

7. **CM:** El próximo aspecto sobre el estilo de supervisión que será explorado es el individualismo y colectivismo. Se cree que la cultura de los Estados Unidos es
individualista, lo que significa que la autonomía del individuo es suprema, con la motivación y metas personales tomando precedente sobre cualquier grupo o preocupaciones o intereses colectivos. Ellos se ven como independientes de sus colectivos; motivados primordialmente por sus propias preferencias, necesidades, derechos; dando prioridad a sus metas personales sobre la de los otros; y enfatizando analíses racionales sobre las ventajas y desventajas de asociarse con otros. En general, ¿usted cree que esto es verdad? ¿Ha visto usted algunas de estas características en los directores/supervisores estadounidenses?

a. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las que ha observado?
b. ¿Usted cree que alguna de estas características afecta al proceso de desarrollo de propuestas y a la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia? Por favor explique.
c. ¿Me podría dar un ejemplo? [si ya me han dado un ejemplo entonces preguntar por otro]

8. **CM:** Se cree que los estadounidenses tienen una cultura individualista vertical. Esto significa que ellos tienen sentido de servir al grupo homogéneo, de sacrificarse por el beneficio de ese grupo y de cumplir sus propios deberes, también significa que ellos aceptan la inigualdad y creen que los rangos tienen privilegios al mismo tiempo que mantienen su naturaleza individualista. Ellos tienden a estar orientados hacia los logros. En general, ¿usted cree que esto es verdad? ¿Ha visto usted algunas de estas características en los directores/supervisores estadounidenses?

a. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las que ha observado?
b. ¿Usted cree que alguna de estas características afecta al proceso de desarrollo de propuestas y a la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia? Por favor explique.
c. ¿Me podría dar un ejemplo? [si ya me han dado un ejemplo entonces preguntar por otro]

El próximo conjunto de preguntas es acerca de cómo la cultura de los Estados Unidos influencia a su estilo de liderazgo.

9. **CL:** El liderazgo en los Estados Unidos está caracterizado por un estilo orientado a la participación, enfocados al compromiso y otorgamiento de poderes de los empleados. Esto asume que la mejor forma de organizarse es de darle a los empleados libertad y responsabilidad para manejar su propio trabajo lo más posible. Los líderes se concentran en desarrollar a los trabajadores y animarlos a que se involucren y tomen responsabilidad por su propio desempeño. Líderes y supervisores se volvieron entrenadores de trabajo en equipo y entusiasmo entre los empleados. En general, ¿usted cree que esto es verdad? ¿Ha visto usted algunas de estas características en los directores/supervisores estadounidenses?

a. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las que ha observado?
b. ¿Usted cree que alguna de estas características afecta al proceso de desarrollo de propuestas y a la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia? Por favor explique.
c. ¿Me podría dar un ejemplo? [SI YA ME HAN DADO UN EJEMPLOENTONCES PREGUNTAR POR OTRO]

El próximo conjunto de preguntas es acerca de la diferencia en la orientación del tiempo de los directores/supervisores estadounidenses.
10. **CTO:** Se cree que la cultura de los Estados Unidos tiene una orientación corta del tiempo. Esto significa que ellos fomentan virtudes relacionadas con el pasado y el presente, en particular con respecto a la tradición, preservación de “la cara” [reputación] y satisfacen la orientación social. En general, ¿usted cree que esto es verdad? ¿Ha visto usted algunas de estas características en los directores/supervisores estadounidenses?
   a. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las que ha observado?
   b. ¿Usted cree que alguna de estas características afecta al proceso de desarrollo de propuestas y a la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia? Por favor explique.
   c. ¿Me podría dar un ejemplo? [si ya me han dado un ejemplo entonces preguntar por otro]

11. **CTO:** Los estadounidenses son clasificados como monocrônicos, lo que significa que ellos tienen cuidado en hacer una cosa a la vez, ellos se concentran el ello y lo hacen durante un horario fijo. Adicionalmente, ellos están dominados por el tiempo y siempre parecieran estar impacientes y apurados. Los estadounidenses creen que el tiempo es dinero. El tiempo es preciado, escaso y una comodidad. Se va rápido. Los estadounidenses son personas de acción y no se pueden quedar quietas. Se la pasan hablando de perder, gastar, presupuestar y ahorrar tiempo. En general, ¿usted cree que esto es verdad? ¿Ha visto usted algunas de estas características en los directores/supervisores estadounidenses?
   a. ¿Podría mencionar algunas de las que ha observado?
   b. ¿Usted cree que alguna de estas características afecta al proceso de desarrollo de propuestas y a la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia? Por favor explique.
   c. ¿Me podría dar un ejemplo? [si ya me han dado un ejemplo entonces preguntar por otro]

El próximo conjunto de preguntas son nada más preguntas generales.

12. **CC:** ¿Cómo usted usualmente se comunica con la oficina internacional?

13. **CC:** ¿Encuentra fácil o difícil comunicarse con la oficina internacional?

14. **CC:** ¿Siente que hay una barrera de lenguaje con su compañero de trabajo estadounidense? (mantener los resultados exitosos de desarrollo de propuestas en mente)

15. Sobre todo, ¿cómo usted cree que estas diferencias culturales impactan al procedimiento de desarrollo de propuestas y la ejecución de proyectos de desarrollo en Bolivia?

   Finalmente, las últimas preguntas son demográficas.

16. ¿Cuántos años tiene?

17. ¿Cuál es su identidad étnica?

18. ¿Cuál es su lenguaje materno?

19. ¿Usted habla algún otro lenguaje? Sí, sí ¿cuál o cuales?

20. ¿Cuál es su experiencia educativa y profesional?
APPENDIX C
U.S. AMERICAN MANAGERS INTERVIEWS

The answers to questions 16-20, which were about the interviewee’s demographic information, were taken off this section in order to keep their anonymity.

Interview 1: April 1st, 2008

Question 1: What traits do Bolivian managers share?

A: I would say our experience is very different. Again it’s important to recognize that the NGO that I work with works with different municipalities and also works with community groups, but my experience has been that when partnerships are developed at the municipal level, when they are part of what’s called here the PALO -Annual Operating Plan (Plan Anual de Operación) and an NGO has done a lot of what’s the word, has had a lot of discussions at the community level that the problems that you mentioned are minimized and less likely to occur. Yes are there delays or problems? My own experience is that there is actually fewer of those delays in Bolivia than they are in other countries primarily because in most projects there is a higher degree of what I call counterpart funding, community participation and involvement, what doesn’t Bolivia, and I just literally between the time that you call for our occasional transport strike and some public demonstrations and things like that, which I would say over the last two years in La Paz, in the Altiplano has been minimized and most people feel in those areas that the new government represents them. In 2003, 2004, 2005, you were never sure everyday if you could get to work or not. You did not know, but now more of the tension or political disturbances are occurring in the lowlands where there is more current opposition to the government than here in the area where my NGO works, so I would not agree with most of the things that were said about Bolivia and Bolivians.

Q: So you don’t think that these traits would affect the procurement process, especially when you are trying to develop a project or to develop a grant proposal, these are minimal right?

A: In the case of the NGO I work with, they are not the big obstacles that we face. Again, because we work with communities for years at a time, they know us, and you know leadership changes, one good mayor or one bad mayor, they are things that all agencies face, but I don’t think there are any greater in Bolivia than they will be else. What you do have in Bolivia which overall is good the popular participation which drives money to rural areas means rural areas and mayors and city counsels and municipalities have more to say about projects that they are going to support, and I would say that overall the participation is good, but occasionally you have corruption with one mayor or someone and you have a problem but is better than having all the corruption centralized at the national level, so I would disagree with those comments from the first question.

Question 2: Do Bolivian managers have a high-context culture?

A: Again I’m going to say that this is not the case of the NGO that I work with. My experience might be different from others, but I think since we do things on a basis of an annual plan. I think it reduces cultural misunderstanding. An the other thing is my experience is that because people are often putting money into projects where both parties are putting resources into the
projects there is generally less confusion. They might not like the way money is spent but people are more thoughtful before they make a commitment.

Q: Are you talking for the case of partnerships?
A: Right when we have partnerships with municipalities or other NGOs we also draw up memorandums of understanding where we spell out: what would this NGO do, what would the municipality do, what would people do so everyone of these roles are defined so I think this reduces misunderstandings. It doesn’t mean you don’t have misunderstandings but it means that things are mapped out a little more carefully when they start.

Question 3 and 4: What are the communication patterns and meeting style of Bolivian managers?

A: I think in many cultures especially those outside of the United States, you just don’t jump in to the business meeting. You always talk about something: you talk about someone’s family, politics of the country, and it’s just a way…it’s part of the culture. In Asia, for instance, you just don’t go and spell out what the business agenda is, so you have a preamble where you have a bit of a discussion about another topic that is just a form of conversation. That is the way things are done here, but I don’t think it’s in any degree excessive or unusual, but I have seen this in many other cultures. So I do not see anything unusual about Bolivia. I think you have people maze with a little bit more of time depending on how the confidence they have with the person, talking about their concerns about politics, which they always seem to have here.

Question 5: Do Bolivian managers have a high-power distance culture?

A: I actually I do think that is true. Haven’t been a director in the United States and been in a hired position, and that is just to compare the U.S. and Bolivia. When I was in the United States I was in a very high position in the headquarters. In the U.S. people feel very comfortable and it’s quite healthy to challenge your boss with different ideas. And what I find Bolivia, and one of the things I do miss about my previous job is that people are very accepting of whatever the boss says. They have this believe that the boss is the boss because he or she knows the best. So there is a tendency to be very accepting of whatever the bosses’ decision is. Now whenever you have to make a tough decision, and you have to do things that is somewhat helpful because people feel that the bosses make the decisions. But, when a decision, I mean when the boss may make a decision that may not be the right one, it’s a little bit harder to get input than if you have a good decision that the privilege.

Q: Do you feel they don’t like to challenge you?
A: Yeah, there is not as much of a healthy challenge. Now, with staff who have worked over a longer period and depending on the style of the boss, and again with different styles it’s not just a Bolivian or North American, that a boss who does not seek input is not going to get input, and that I think is not really healthy in the long run. Now, this would also be true in Asia where there is clarity but for a person who comes from a culture of the United States or Europe they are probably much more accustomed to giving some pushback with challenge, which can often lead to a healthier program because people feel comfortable doing that. I think that is somewhat true here in Bolivia. “My jefe me dijo” (My boss told me) and they accept that, so I would tend to agree with that. One has to really seek out: What did you think about this? How would you do this? And if you do that you then you get the input but otherwise you might not get it.

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Question 6: Do Bolivian managers have a high-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: I’m not sure if this is the right example. I think of the things that it takes a little while to get used to here is that the disproportionate amount of time that is spent on work plans, and annual plans about donations etc. I think there is a tendency here that if we do enough planning, we are going to avoid corruption, everything and we would be fine. So for someone from a different deployment experiences in other parts of the world or in the U.S. or elsewhere, so yeah you know it’s a good thing that we should do planning, but the planning should be 10% or 15% of our time. So there is an undue obsession with documents, and rules and I’m not taking about procurement rules or rules that guarantee transparency because I think those are needed and I think here they are quite helpful. You know that most NGOs or most serious NGOs do know best to try to promote transparency but the cost to the country of the amount of time spent on planning and not doing is a bit excessive.

Question 7: Do Bolivian managers have a collectivistic culture?

A: I think it’s definitely true more in the rural areas, where some of the rural structures and community groups are intact. I think 95% of the time it’s probably very positive where people share work, share labor, share childcare, anticipated community projects at very high levels participated with others however … And I think there is that wonderful aspect of the Bolivian culture. But at the same time, a lot of times because of the tight relations with the community there is a tendency to protect people who may have done something wrong and you may not hear about it at the time when something may be done to resolve things. There is also, I have seen it, not so much in the organization that I work with because we have rules against this, but occasionally people, you know just like in anywhere else, you hire friends more because they are your friends and family than because of their capacity, so on one hand there is a little bit of that loyalty, but that loyalty can, and this is not the case in our organization because we have rules about hiring for family members, but I think it’s important to have those type of rules because they are plenty of talented Bolivians and you need not have to hire family members. Currently in the country, there is a lot of tension between, is not always spoken about, between indigenous, middle class, and upper class, that doesn’t always bring people together. There are always misunderstandings on all parts, no one is totally right about things and there is also a part who is putting the picture together to ensure that all Bolivians have a stake in their future. And I think some of this is a post back to so many years of exclusion were the poorest people were certainly not represented.

Questions 8: Do Bolivian managers have a vertical collectivistic culture?

A: I think one of the problems here is the … on History for many years of corruption and government and again at the scale in which you know, my NGO operates we do not often see that, but we do know that it goes on in the larger environment. It is unusual when we would be approach with something that it is illegal; I am not saying it is never happened, but it’s very unusual. But in the larger context, at the national context, you know you hear stories of: you want this contract; you pay off business what is going to cost you to get it or this is what you have to do for me or my family or someone else. And I think that history over many governments or different governments creates a lot of distrusted governments, and creates an attitude of that if I get into the government, well I’m only going to be there for a short term and
then maybe I could take advantage of that. My own personal feeling is that I would like to believe that the current government has probably less of that corruption and there is more of that social commitment but when I say that to Bolivian friends they say that it is exactly the same. It’s hard to believe that but that’s what many, many people say which is a big disappointment because the government ensures still 50% of public support, which is remarkable in a country that has never had president support of 20% - 25% of support. But nevertheless, over the last year people have said no this is not any different. We just got an Indigenous President. Again, to prove or disprove that I’m just guessing along on a very unscientific summary of what I hear from Bolivians.

**Question 9: What is the leadership style of Bolivian managers?**

A: Again, at the municipal level that we deal at, people are elected publicly, leadership often changes. At the national level I think is less nepotism you know which you see in any government. Any government that wins elections hires their own people. And you can definitely see that now. I think one of the challenges here, some of the people coming into the government have never worked in a government, have never had to be operational before, so the get bigger challenges given that the current government wants to make many social changes which in theory are probably excellent, in theory. But when you take theoretical changes and combine that with people who don’t have the same degree of experience in public administration it leads to a lot of stagnation that it stays at the ideal stage but there isn’t the capacity for implementation. In terms of family nepotism, it is probably more party nepotism and it’s probably made different than it was in the past. Although, I am not probably the best person to answer that.

**Question 10: Do Bolivian managers have a long-time orientation?**

A: I find what I would consider relatively simple things do take longer here. One of the reasons and I’ll just pick an example, that procurement process to purchase 100,000 pens or something because there is a very high concern about dishonesty, people have very complexes processes that in a sense do promote transparency, but it takes longer. Takes a lot longer. The balance is skewed toward trying to make sure that everything is done honestly and transparently but there is a cost, and I’m not saying it shouldn’t be done that way but the procedure that is in place to promote this are very, very cumbersome. And sometimes the simple procurement would be surprising on how long it might take.

Q: This question in a sense, or at least what the scholars are trying to say is that the Bolivians will be more focus on the future goals and that they will try to foster those future goals rather than the present. But do you think they are more focus on the present rather than on future goals? It is just another way to put this question.

A: I’m trying to think, future or present. I’m not so sure about that because my experience when you first start working, and I’m going to speak more about, I think people have short term and long term goals. I don’t think, there is an experience when you work in an individual water project or training project, while people are working on a project like this there are also talking about other things they want to do, so I really don’t think it is one or another and I think as people do more short term things it threatens and blocks their vision for things that they feel are potential and they can complete. I have seen this with youth groups, I have seen this with
women groups, I do think it’s important to identify short-term projects or trainings that need positive impact so people want to do things for the community for the future…

Q: But you don’t see a tendency of one over the other? Is it just depending on the project or the need at that time?
A: No, I think people…I think the tendency is to get something done quickly and have a goal completed and I think the fact that people have a success or something together as a group, opens up their horizon to do things that might take them a little more time to accomplish.

Question 11: Do Bolivian managers have a polychronic time orientation?

A: In regards to time management, people are very unpunctual and not very responsible. There is a wide extreme. You do meet Bolivians that are very time conscious, and very respectful of your time and their time, but in general, mostly in rural areas there is definitely a different sense of time than if you come from a class that starts at 8 o’clock at the University of Florida and you are used to going to class at 9 o’clock and another one at 10:30, you are not going to be very happy in Bolivia because your 8 o’clock class might start at 10:30. And this is both in terms of business and in terms of social events.

Q: So how do you think this aspect affect the procurement and execution of development projects in specific?
A: It does affect them because often times you go to a meeting and the meeting won’t start until the last person comes, so you have wasted one hour and a half. Something that in practice, you know at least here in my organization, we call a meeting at 10 o’clock, we start at 10 o’clock and if someone is not here then they miss the meeting and it’s too bad, and I know there are a lot of other NGO and offices that work that way. You have to adjust to it because people will definitely be late for things, and truthfully they do not even have a feeling that it is not respectful or wrong, it’s just the way they do things. I am not talking about a problem because of traffic or protest, I’m talking about a routine meeting when people could walk in schedule, people could walk in any time from 10 to 11:30. You do see this less and less in the private sector and business, people are much more punctual, like they would be anywhere else but the behavior of time responsibility is I would call quite immature in general.

Q: And do you think this affects meeting deadlines, for instance, when it comes to grant proposals or project deadlines?
A: Huh uh, I think most grant proposals you meet the deadline or you don’t apply for, but it does, things tend to j tag out, a lot of times is after you have received the grants when you have certain advantages to make to the donor and I’m not talking about protect weather or natural events which are of reasonable causes for delay, I mean I know one example in our office we have to do a lot of publications. Publications often have to be approved by different ministries and by different donors so I think with publications getting everyone to sing off on a publication…let’s just take a simple example: calendars. You know calendars are from January to December, I got a calendar, this is actually from a business…yesterday, and it’s the end of March. I got a calendar for 2008 and I may have probably received 10-15 calendars all in the month of March, and these are January to December calendars. So calendars is something that you prepare every year, you can prepare calendars for the next 10 years because you know what the dates are, so that is a perfect example of lack of planning. I think these companies that send you their calendars in April they should just start them in April.

Q: That is true! They are wasting all those pages by printing months that already went by.
A: Right.
Question 12 and 13: How is the communication between the national and international offices?

A: In the case of our NGO we communicate a lot through email, or through the palm, which did not work that well, but mostly it is just through electronic communication, faxes, etc.

Q: And is it all in English or Spanish or both?

A: In both, but it also depends. Here in the Bolivia office we use all Spanish, although some of our Bolivian staff speak English. Here’s an example, today I happen to talk to with a woman who’s probably been here for a year she spoke excellent English. I didn’t know, I didn’t know until today because we always speak in Spanish. But now that I know that she speaks English I want her to get better in English so I’ll probably speak some English to her, but I was stunned that she had such a high level of English because in Bolivia you really don’t find the same capacity in English language as you might find in certainly Perú, Chile, Argentina, Colombia, it’s a level that is much lower, so the language is certainly Spanish in the office and the communications with our headquarter are mostly in English, and we have some other staff members who speak Aymara or Quechua or one or the other plus Spanish and fewer who speak English.

Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the Bolivian managers?

Q: But in general do you think that there is language or communication barrier due to the language or no?

A: I don’t actually think so, I think Bolivia is actually done very well in terms of education, most people can communicate in Spanish, I think what does creep Bolivia is people in Bolivia and in all NGOs, a lot of large international organizations do a lot of international training with a bunch of Latin American English and because overall the language capacity is lower in Bolivia than in other countries people from Bolivia do have to send the same person over and over which tend to lose opportunity to send people because English level capacity at the high school and university level for whatever reason is not as extensive or people don’t study as hard as they would in other countries. In that sense many opportunities are not taken advantage of because they just don’t have a person to send to or they can’t afford to have a $250 day translator for . . .

Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?

A: I don’t think they impact Bolivia more than they do in another cultures. I don’t see all the things that we have talked about are things that go on in every culture. I think one thing that probably affects Bolivia is the number of protests, delays and acceptance of work stoppages that in most countries are not tolerated. That is a big factor, although, again the geographic areas or [inaudible] if it works they have been less of an issue over the last 2 years they would probably be more of an issue over the next two months, so if you happen to work in an area where there is conflict, the government has always and at least the current government, there is people who block the road appears in Cochabamba and Santa Cruz for two weeks, close all commercial traffic and none one would do anything about it because it’s their right to protest, and a lot of those types of events really slow development for the country, they make it so that any private investor will think twice before they produce or manufacture anything they might not be able to get it out of the country or if there is food or anything perishable if it’s sitting on a truck two
days in a row it will rotten, so that type of culture that is so accepting of street protests and what I would consider economic terrorism, I think does terrible damage to the country as a whole.

Interview 2: April 5th, 2008

Question 1: What traits do Bolivian managers share?

A: Well let’s see there are so many of those, but the first one that comes up to mind is time table, and it does seems that in my interaction, that it just has been difficult to, regardless of the fact that we make a task list for proposal development and you know have people’s names right next to each task, and it seems like we still find challenges in meeting those deadlines, and I always struggle with figuring out why exactly but it seems that we are not communicating clearly. Are they not understanding? And even we encourage them, if you cannot meet a deadline to please let us know and then we can adjust that deadline but it seems that there is this lack or I don’t know, this wall in our communication styles, but we are not connecting, we are not able to agree on a plan and then actually stick to that plan. One example, for instance, was this huge proposal that we were working on with the Bolivian team and at that point it was just very difficult to get the information that we needed at the time that we specified for the proposal submission and ultimately we were unable to submit because we were not meeting those deadlines. Things were not happening fast enough and with such a short turnaround, as with all proposals we were not able to put it together in time and we had to pull the plug. And I’m also thinking, this one relates more to general communication challenges, but in my new job we do a lot of back and forth communication to sort of agree on accounts or pools of money that are specifically tied to a certain grant and so I need to work with the fields to make sure that we are all in agreement as to what the restrictions are on that prospect or on that pool of money and for some reason, even when I am communicating directly with the field officer in Bolivia and I have specific bullets points of questions for some reason I still don’t get the information from her, you know most of our communication is via email just because is easy to lay this information out, it’s easier to have word for word, there is no sort of we are speaking quickly and not understanding each other. From my perspective, it is what I perceive to be the best option because it can be the clearest, however, when we go back and forth, I still don’t seem to receive the information that I am asking, and I don’t know. I spoke to my colleagues about this and I am a native English speaker, where they are native Spanish speakers and I’ll say, they’ll be copied on the email, are you understanding what I’m saying? Do you see? Am I saying something wrong? Am I not posting the information properly? And they always tell me: No, no, no, it’s just Bolivia you know they can be very difficult, and I always wonder: Am I not asking the questions right? Or are they sort of trying to evade the questions? Are they trying to get around that sort of question because they want to have a customer created because they want to start spending that money?

Question 2: Do Bolivian managers have a high-context culture?

A: I definitely think that is true, that there are some norms, some rules that I feel like I am not understanding, I mean I feel like it is apparent in all or our communications. It’s just such a challenge for us to agree on something and to move forward on something. I feel like one of the interesting things of my organization is that a lot of the relationships between the headquarter office and the field offices varied so for another Latin American country for example we work very close to them, we are helping them with their proposals all the time, however, with Bolivia
we consider it a very independent country. They do a lot of their own submissions, and when we try to work with them on large federal projects - federal proposals we meet a lot of challenges and I think that probably further their independence because we are not having this positive interactions, usually we are able to connect them, and most of our country directors are actually expatriates, maybe from Canada and a few that are American, or people from the rest of continent working in other countries that have been for a long time in the United States, so I feel like there is an understanding of what exactly our cultural norms are and in Bolivia, we have a Bolivian director and doesn’t speak English so I feel like there is a real barrier in just understanding, and that in these proposal submissions that were unsuccessful nobody really feels good about what happened, and then we just don’t seek those opportunities anymore. We are not trying to find opportunities to work with them, because it doesn’t work, so that is fine in the sense that Bolivia is doing a good job in securing some of their own funding through PROCOSI so that’s great. It is not like they are doing terribly and they even got two different awards that were really help them a lot, but I just think, I wish that we could communicate more clearly so that we could have positive experiences and work more in the same projects like we do with other countries. I feel like everybody should have sort of the same benefit of having an International office support.

Question 3 and 4: What are the communication patterns and meeting style of Bolivian managers?

A: I would definitely say some. I’m just thinking of the problems that we have had and I can remember been in a conference room with my International Office (IO) coworker and the Bolivian officer and we would agree: Oh yes, this is the potential proposal opportunity, but we need to make sure that we have enough match contribution and I’m just thinking of a specific proposal and so we had this conversation, we wanted to talk in the phone to make sure that we were all in agreement, so we did, and we came to that agreement of going for it, but then there was just never any follow through, we never really, we didn’t follow up with the Bolivian officer because the ball was on his court and with things been busy as they are on the IO, we don’t have time to check back in, and say hey where is it? Where is it? You know we hoped that the field wants to push these things forward because they benefit their project. And then we would check when it would come back, when we would get more information about how we were going to obtain match, then we would come back and say okay now we can do this to help you. Yes and the problem is that we always feel that we have positive communication but then when it comes to actual implementation of whatever it is, be it a proposal or an intent form, an RSVP, any of these different tools that we use it just doesn’t seem to get done.

Q: So do you see that they discuss things randomly but then the conclusion that they reach is not accomplish? Is that it?
A: That they discuss things randomly? Hmm

Q: When you are in a meeting, do you feel that there is an interaction in the meetings, or do you feel that things are just discussed too broadly or too randomly? Then sort of everyone reaches a conclusion but then nobody knows really if there is a conclusion or not?
A: It seems that to actually move towards a goal one of us at the IO really needs to lead the meeting and needs to ask the same question like ten times. It has to be said over and over again; so okay it’s like ok that’s to this now what is our next step. And we can’t seem to get a concrete next step, is like our Bolivian counterpart will talk in circles and he’ll address the issue but never actually answer the question and so then we have to ask again and ask again, which can be
difficult when we are dealing with language barriers we wonder, are we not understanding? Did we miss something? What’s going on? So we have to ask again. The good thing is that one of our field officers here at the IO lived in Bolivia so he is good at that, he is good at understanding how sort of politely come back to that, but for me it’s challenging. I can pretty much only be direct in Spanish, I mean I can try to be more flowery or more polite, or more Latin American in style but it’s just very difficult for me. And then I feel bad because I feel like I must have missed something or I do not understand, but I don’t want to be rude.

**Question 5: Do Bolivian managers have a high-power distance culture?**

**A:** That is a really hard one to say, the only thing that comes in mind is that whenever I talk to the office manager in Bolivia, she always refers to the country manager by his degree title, like engineer, or professor, or doctor, which is weird because everyone here at here the IO calls the country manager by his nickname. It’s kind of funny that she calls him that because she works so closely with him for so long but she always addresses him very formally and properly. But other than that, I can’t really say that I noticed it, but I haven’t spend much time in the Bolivian office and my interactions are primarily only with a few people and not so much with their interacting together it will be me talking to just a couple of people only.

**Q:** Ok so when it comes to the projects and developing their proposals and executing the projects themselves, let’s say that you have to contact somebody who is not the country manager, let’s say that you have to contact somebody working in the methodology and evaluation or the budgeting, do you feel that you can get things done with that person or do you feel that there needs to be permission from the country manager, or do you see that there is a hierarchy that stops you or it may be an obstacle when it comes to executing the whole project or process.

**A:** Well, definitely it does seem like everything needs to be checked off and approved by the country manager, always needs to be copied and everything has to go through him, and it does seem difficult because I feel like projects can often get bottle in that. If we could just connect with someone else we could probably move things forward much faster but since the country director is so busy and has so much going on, the things that could be done right away, for example, I tried to collect all the reports from Bolivia because we are supposed to have copies at the IO in case we get audited and it was months and months and at one point there were 25 outstanding reports, which is crazy. And basically, I had to have my supervisor talk to the country manager because I was not getting them and ultimately I ended up receiving them from another two Bolivian officers, which is great, but I feel like well I wish then I would had just been talking to these two other officers to begin with and they could have just sent them over like that, because it probably took them like one hour to get all of the reports updated.

**Q:** So do you think they have to get a permission from the country manager?

**A:** Definitely, I think they do. It just seems like every interaction includes the country manager, every interaction sort of needs his approval, to sign off his permission and yes it can hurt the project only because, I think it’s great that he’s evolved because he’s a smart guy and has all of this amazing experience, but I think it slows things down so much that some times we are not able to move as fast as we need to and I think that is a real difference. American culture and especially how the deadline society of proposals, and reports, you have to move so fast, and it just doesn’t seem like they are able to understand the urgency of these things.
Question 6: Do Bolivian managers have a high-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: Let me think about that one. It is interesting because at my organization almost all the staff has been there for so long so as much as there seems to be some political instability and all kinds of instability in Bolivia, the staff have been there for a long time, and I do think they really have very clear structures within their office, who does what, how the general system is, sort of like the rules for their office, but I can’t think on any specific examples or anything that highlights that.

Question 7: Do Bolivian managers have a collectivistic culture?

A: I can’t say that I had any interaction in that sense. With me it is so difficult because I have not had all that much interaction with Bolivia, which is weird because I did a trip there and I got to know them a little better, I have some experience with them before that, but it’s funny I know so many more of the staff in other offices. But Bolivia, since they are so independent, I only get emails from some of the Bolivian officers once in a while, but I don’t feel like I have anything to say about this one. It’s a tough one.

Questions 8: Do Bolivian managers have a vertical collectivistic culture?

A: It’s funny because I feel that there is a perceived vertical structure of the IO, like working at the IO were somehow above on some hierarchy, like the Bolivian staff, I feel like even the country director is very obliging, like yes we’ll do this for you, we’ll do that for you, whether or not is actual a follow through it. I always sort of want to say so what are you really thinking? You know tell me what you really think versus what you think that you are supposed to say. And so I feel that with our relationship that just been in the IO that we are somehow the rule enforcers, we are the people that they need to report to, and in a lot of ways it is but I mean really it’s a partnership and we do a lot of negotiation back and forth with different countries. It is not like whatever we say goes, you know we try to come to giving some compromise but definitely I feel that interactions with the country director, he is sort of assumes or presumes us to be the hierarchy that the IO what the IO says goes especially with the VPs of our organization.

Question 9: What is the leadership style of Bolivian managers?

A: I have not seen anything like that, so I couldn’t say that I think this is true.

Question 10: Do Bolivian managers have a long-time orientation?

A: I definitely think that is true. I feel like they are really focus on building relationships and communicating with donors in a positive way that they do focus on long term benefits. They put a lot of time on planning, like in one of the trips to Bolivia, they really had the whole thing planned out so well, it was very clear that they put tons and tons of thoughts and time and planning. They knew exactly where we will be, who will be there, I think it was such a great example of planning and dedication and how they want things to turn out. They did an amazing job so it was like the longer perception of time, over longer distances, over longer periods I should say versus short term.
Question 11: Do Bolivian managers have a polychronic time orientation?

A: Well I think our staff in Bolivia have a very regular schedule, they tend to come in at the same time and leave at the same time and so they are punctual in that way, but in terms of scheduling that we have in project proposals and with projects, that it’s just I don’t know, you will say I need half of the needs assessments done by Thursday, and Thursday will come and go and it’s not like they see a need to communicate that to us no we were unable to do it and that they were just going to do it in a couple of days, so yes I definitely think that that is true

Q: So do you think that they are not interested in schedules and...

A: That is at least with our perception of what deadlines and timelines are.

Q: How would you describe that in your own words?

A: I would just say that when, to me what I would suggest to someone who is going to have communication with our staff in Bolivia, I would say that they have to be extremely clear in what your deadlines are, reinforce it about three times, reinforce it on paper, reinforce it orally and then follow up every single day because otherwise they are not going to pursue those deadlines as actual deadlines. They are just going to perceive them as flexible ideas maybe instead of hard and soft deadlines.

Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?

A: Either through email or AIM.

Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?

A: I think that through email has been challenging and some times with certain staff more than others. I tend to have easier communications with the country directer than with other staff. I find that with AIM a lot of times that can actually be very beneficial because it’s sort of on the spot. All of those questions that I would bullet on my email, I can repeat again and I would get better answers, through AIM, sort of that they are more force or more crunched with the question that I was asking, so it really helped me understand different proposal situations or different financial situations by going bit by bit, with very small pieces of information instead of like grander concepts. But I mean it’s definitely a challenge.

Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the Bolivian managers?

A: I do, and I don’t know, but I mean there is definitely a language barrier and my Spanish is far from perfect and they don’t speak English so that for sure is a challenge, but I feel more than anything there is a cultural difference, it is evident that through our language and through our communication but is just that we are not agreeing on the same things. Like we can use words that we think are representative and that are conveying a certain message that is not how it is interpreted so I feel that definitely there are for sure language challenges but even more than that is cultural challenges. That we are not operating on the same set of norms or ideas of how things should or should not be.
Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?

A: I think that in general the challenges that we face through languages and culture just slow down the process of developing proposals and sort of establishing project implementation plans in the beginning right after we have been funded. Especially because it’s difficult for us to get the answers that we need and in the time that we need them and so it just slows down the process and sometimes it slows it down like with this particular proposal, it slowed it down so much that we were not able to submit the proposal because we were not able to submit that deadline. And so I think that happens with a lot of proposals or in a lot of instances because there is just no follow through that things don’t get submitted. Proposals are put on the back room and sort of forgotten about and with other countries they might be submitted that next week, you know we establish a deadline and then people continue to meet their deadline so when the ball sort of gets stuck on one person then nothing gets move forward so I think that it hurts their financial situation because proposals are how country offices stay open you know that is what pays their bills, so I think that it is great that with PROCOSI, they are able to do all of their own submissions. It’s in the local language, it’s in the culture that they understand, and so they are very successful so I think that is evident. It illustrates the fact that they are actually very smart, very talented, that they are great at what they do, they do good projects and good work and that they are able to be successful with proposals, so that is just such a perfect example. Yes when we need to submit to American or European donors then the challenges are much greater because we are on this different culture that stays unable to be flexible with.

Interview 3: April 14th, 2008

Question 1: What traits do Bolivian managers share?

A: In general, yes that could be true, but there were very many characteristics that I might have agreed upon and others that I might have not.
Q: Could you please tell me which ones do you think are true and which ones you think are false?
A: You are going to tell them to me, one by one and I’ll tell you which ones are which.
Q: That is ok. For instance, do you think they plan the grand outline only?
A: No, not necessarily.
Q: Do they do several things at once?
A: Yes.
Q: They are not punctual?
A: That is true
Q: The timetable is unpredictable?
A: That is true.
Q: They change plans?
A: That is some times true.
Q: They are people oriented?
A: This is true
Q: They pull stings?
A: This is true.
Q: They talk for hours?
A: Some times not always
Q: Rarely writes memos?
A: That is true also
Q: Seeks out top key person?
A: Yes, that is true.
Q: Interrupts frequently and interweaves social and professional life?
A: That is sometimes true.
Q: Now, after going over which ones are true or not, how do you think these affect the procurement and execution process of development projects in Bolivia?
A: I honestly do not think that those cultural aspects are taken too much into account in terms of the procurement process, I do not think they directly affect much at all.
Q: So you do not think they affect neither the procurement process nor execution process of development projects in Bolivia?
A: No, I do not think so. I think they are generally understood to be cultural aspects but implementers would have to be sensitive too, so I don’t think that it directly or deliberately included into consideration.

**Question 2: Do Bolivian managers have a high-context culture?**

A: Yes, I do think that in general is true and I have seen that in our experience.
Q: Do these traits affect the procurement process or execution processes?
A: Hmm not directly, but I believe we do consider especial requirements and communication and utilizing communication means to Bolivian teams because of those characteristics.
Q: So, is it easy or difficult? I mean do you think that often things are misinterpreted because of this?
A: Hmm not generally, but it may be an occasional possibility for a project, Yes.
Q: And do you have a general example? It could be a general example?
A: Just for example for communicating programs strategies and objectives and the implementation of a project it is important to really communicate well, and we may utilize a variety of different tools for communication been sensitive to the cultural aspects of communication.

**Question 3: What is the communication pattern of Bolivian managers?**

A: Some aspects of that are generally true but I think it does not have a serious effect or impact on the procurement or implementation of activities. I think that the most important thing is that project leaders and managers are sensitive to those cultural aspects.
Q: And do you have any example?
A: Hmm I think one good example is the manner in which decisions are made, at all levels, and that there is all participation by all levels including administration and technical positions, so that when directors, and leaders and managers make decisions there reflecting the whole input of other levels as well and that comes from leadership styles, those managers.

**Question 4: What is the meeting style of Bolivian managers?**

A: No, I do not think that that is generally true. Maybe it is a different people that we are working with but we have not experienced those characteristics.
Question 5: Do Bolivian managers have a high-power distance culture?

A: Yes, that is generally true. They expect a hierarchy and they expect decision making to be done according to hierarchy and they are structured and they are thinking according to hierarchy and we see that very typically almost every day in our decisions and processes.

Q: And do you think that this positively or negatively impact the procurement and/or execution of projects in Bolivia?

A: Yes it does sometimes affect the processes and maybe inhibits participatory environment amongst all individuals on a team that again is a responsibility of leaders and managers to be sensitive to that cultural aspect.

Q: When you say of the managers, which managers do you mean? The Americans or the Bolivians?

A: All managers. Bolivian managers and American managers.

Q: So do you see that the Bolivian managers seek this out a lot? That they try to seek out the participation of their employees?

A: Many of them are sensitive to that cultural aspect yes.

Q: And do you have any example?

A: Well we have many managers, Bolivian managers here for example who foment participatory relationships with their team members, that way they are not perceived as been a hierarchical person in terms of they make the decisions and they make their teams feel like their input is valuable and they are part of the decision making process.

Q: And do they welcome suggestions from their team members?

A: Yes, definitely.

Question 6: Do Bolivian managers have a high-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: In general, yes I think it is true. I have seen some of those traits.

Q: Do you think this affects the procurement or execution process of projects in Bolivia?

A: No, because many times the uncertainty and political or social aspects in Bolivia affects what priorities are given to procurement and it affects what activities are implemented in different ways in terms of strategies and overall tactics.

Q: Do you have any examples?

A: Activities that we are currently engaged in are very sensitive to political and social instability and currently in Bolivia there is a lot of uncertainty in terms of the political and social instability of Bolivia

Question 7: Do Bolivian managers have a collectivistic culture?

A: In general, yes I think it is true and it can be reflected many times in what we see as community efforts or group efforts to try to improve their economic or social conditions and we see that on a daily basis here when generally the request for example for assistance that we receive comes from groups and from individuals joined together as a group in a community or the other way.

Q: So does this affect mainly the execution process or the procurement process also?

A: No, I would say mostly just the execution process.

Q: Can you think of any example?
A: Yes, request for community improvement or social and economic conditions usually comes from groups as opposed to individuals, most decisions are made as groups, they are not always necessarily community level decisions but they are made with the intent to have community input.

Q: So for the good of everybody in a sense?
A: Yes for the good of everybody.

Questions 8: Do Bolivian managers have a vertical collectivistic culture?

A: In general I think that that is true. Generally decisions are made from the perspective of man in a group but also because they feel that they make the decisions for others in a way.

Q: And how do you think this affect the procurement or execution of projects in Bolivia?
A: Greater effort and greater diligence and assure equal participation and equal voice in project development.

Q: From who?
A: From all the participants.

Q: So because of this the participants have to…I am sorry I did not understand your answer.
A: That yes as leaders and managers of an activity we have to ensure that there is a strategy and objectives for ensuring that there is gender emphasis, that there is emphasis about indigenous individuals they are part of the group, especially if they are from a minority part, you have to have specific strategies to ensure equal participation.

Q: So is that from the American managers who are trying to look for more equality or the people themselves, not the managers but the other coworkers, are they the ones trying to ensure equality?
A: We are all trying to ensure equal participation from all beneficiaries and all stakeholders.

Question 9: What is the leadership style of Bolivian managers?

A: In general, no I do not think it is true but it does occasionally occur, especially in the political environment but it does occasionally occur.

Q: Can you think of any example?
A: The example is that it is generally accepted in higher-level positions to have situations where nepotism could be observed.

Q: So is this more in the political arena or also when they are working…?
A: Political and in businesses but not necessarily in the execution of projects. El sector público y privado (the public and private sector).

Q: How about in the NGOs?
A: Not so much.

Question 10: Do Bolivian managers have a long-time orientation?

A: In general I believe this is true I believe, and yes I have seen these traits. I think there is a tendency many times to focus on short term impact than in general it requires a good project strategy for a long term orientation. For example we provided valuable services to stakeholders in terms of what are the feasible parts of activities to implement and what are the best interests in improving the quality of life over a longer term. So I think it is negated in the fact that we, the methodology of the project to be implemented has to reflect the inclusion of a long-term vision.
Question 11: Do Bolivian managers have a polychronic time orientation?

A: No, in general I do not think that is true. I think they have multiple motifs for what motivates them, and I do not think that that is generally true.
Q: So when it comes to meeting deadlines you do not see this aspect as an issue for either the procurement or execution of projects?
A: No I do not.

Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?

A: Spanish generally some times in English. Usually in meetings or more formal forum where there is a group of individuals, occasionally in one-on-one with managers, and directors, and often in a large group via email or teleconference or via personal visits and discussions.
Q: And this is both in English and in Spanish? Or mainly in Spanish?
A: Mainly in Spanish.

Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?

A: Challenging sometimes because of language but generally it is a good communication.
Q: Why? Are you the only one who is bilingual in the office?
A: No, we have several, who are bilingual, and we have bilingual staff in the home office but the communication is limited because of the capacity of English or capacity of Spanish of individuals in the US.
Q: And it is everything through email?
A: Yes mostly email, but some times telephone.

Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the Bolivian managers?

A: Sometimes there is a language barrier but not always.

Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?

A: Sometimes yes they could. I think all of the aspects that we have talked about are very important things to consider, culturally and everything, the most important thing I think it is managers, especially U.S. or expatriate managers need to be very sensitive to these cultural aspects when they propose or when they develop and implement programs or projects. To overcome this, you will definitely required on the job experience but some training is also necessary.

Interview 4: April 18th, 2008

Question 1: What traits do Bolivian managers share?

A: It is a difficult question. I am going to answer it sort of generally. I think that one of the main differences say between, I mean that sounds like a very sort of Western perspective of Bolivian
culture and one of the main differences is that logistically Bolivia is a difficult place if you are dealing with La Paz or other places you know in Bolivia, is not like you have this wonderful transportation and infrastructure and what not that we have in the U.S. and also sort of the, you know, everybody who has their prices on the Internet and their names and their phone book and what not, so a lot of time we are safe for some procurement which sort of or for services or goods in our projects with looking at a very sort of reduced numbers of suppliers, as well as you know some of those suppliers having problems in even accessing the goods that we need because of you know road blockades or problems at port or whatever may be, so it is not an easy operational environment that you can necessarily compared to the U.S. or Western Europe. So I guess that is how I would answer that question, I do not know much about sort of the if you are getting at cronyism I forget exactly how you phrased that vis-à-vis other countries in the region, but you know yes in this and in general personal relationships are very important and potentially I guess more important in Latin American and in the Caribbean. It turns up a culture of corruption, I think that is one thing that we make great efforts as an International NGO to try to avoid or overcome in terms of some of our procurement policies and other policies that we have just in terms of just ways that we do business around, whatever it may be anything as mundane from making sure that we get three quotes on anything that we are procuring to making sure that we have contracts for transportation or more formal contracts as supposed to sort of handshake kind of deals. Obviously we have to make sure that we get formal receipts for anything that we would purchase of all the goods and services that we would purchase and we have a strong internal audit from chain within the organization that can specifically look at that as we feel is necessary.

**Question 2: Do Bolivian managers have a high-context culture?**

**A:** My guess is that it would be true, but I cannot really comment on that. I have not worked a long time in Bolivia. I mean everywhere you go, every country is a bit different on that, but yes every country including the United States assumes some level of shared understanding so yes that is obviously present. I do not know exactly how sort of forthcoming and open people are in Bolivia vis-à-vis other countries. So I cannot really comment on that too much.

**Question 3 and 4: What are the communication patterns and meeting style of Bolivian managers?**

**A:** I can’t really comment on this one. I mean that sounds like a really over generalization. I mean there are a lot of different levels of conversations I mean it’s just a conversation around sort of just again more mundane or sort of the operational aspects, I find that Bolivians are pretty straight forward and pretty direct after it surrounds something that sort of requires a bit more… I don’t know…sort of political or a bit more nuance position, or there is something that you are advocating for with someone then yes I would probably characterize it more as such or as the generalization that you present but again, I find it just very general to sort of blank it agree with that statement.
Question 5: Do Bolivian managers have a high-power distance culture?

A: I would say in general it is not true. As evidence by you know, just sort of the quantity of protests, and the continual sort of back and forth and sort of the power struggle that goes on in Bolivia in general, is more along the political lines.

Q: But regarding those processes, wouldn’t that show the system is still in place and that it is still working, like the whole social hierarchy and only now or recently they are trying to fight and break the system?

A: Yeah, I guess compared to military dictatorships of the 1980s you could say that, but potentially I mean Bolivia is a very complex place because you know it is a very complicated place in terms of la media luna (half moon) and the Andes and the highlands, you sort of feel that they are sort of two different people with different interests and almost sort of geographically two different countries so obviously they are sort of push and pull or sort of tug around, a continual struggle for power among those two sort large factions and I think is manifested in lots of street protests, lots of people been very open to expressing or to sort of using their ability or their openness to protest in the streets about whatever they feel is an abusive power. A lot of times that is very sort of a localize thing where somebody is accusing a major or some sort of corruption or something like that and a lot of times it’s actually a national thing, and another times is sort of economic. But I think that the Bolivians are very questioning of authority and power structure as much more so than some other countries.

Q: And how do you think this aspect affects when thinking about project proposals or the execution of projects in Bolivia? For instance, do you feel that the playing field is level in that sense or do you feel that there is a lot of things that need to happen before a consensus is reached. Let’s say somebody is working on a proposal and they cannot send it to the U.S. office because it needs to go through four different people before it gets here. I do not know if you have seen that or not?

A: I do not understand the question, but when we develop a proposal there is a lot of considerations I mean first of all who is the donor, or the potential donor, what are their specific interest, what are we responding to, I mean because most of the times when you develop a proposal, well all of the time you have information about what is important for that donor, whether it be just sort of like a sector, you know, this donor wants to work in health and nutrition or whatever, or what is usually the case, you have a very specific set of rules and program objectives that the donor sets out and that you decide as an organization whether you want to respond to that or not. I mean it becomes sort of a very targeted and technical endeavor and not necessarily, you know very targeted and technical and relatively straightforward. So I am not exactly sure if I am answering your question.

Q: Well, basically what I wanted to know is if you see any delay or problem (caused by this cultural aspect) in getting information from the Bolivia office once both the Bolivian and International office are working on a proposal or a project?

A: Well I do not really see it as a problem in the Bolivian office and one other sort of real practical aspect that becomes problematic is the language because a lot of the stuff that we have to do has to be in English and so I mean obviously, me trying to write in Spanish, I can do ok, but I need somebody to edit and to make sure that I am explaining myself clear as possible. So yeah, for the Bolivian staff trying to write in English if that’s the language that we have to use it should be at least edited so that the points are coming across clearly, but I don’t think it is anything sort of institutionalized necessarily where people feel somehow by the people at the headquarters or something like that.
Question 6: Do Bolivian managers have a high-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: I can’t really comment on that, I mean a lot of these questions. I mean they are great questions it is just that I would have to have worked longer in Bolivia and more specifically Bolivia to have a good opinion in a lot of what you are asking, but unfortunately that is not my case.

Question 7 and 8: Do Bolivian managers have a collectivistic and a vertical collectivistic culture?

A: Yes I would say that probably is general that is true. I think that sort of the idea of social capital is more important in a lot of developing countries and in a lot of Latin American countries again, compared to what though, compared to Central America? Or compared to the United States?

Q: I mean to ask if you have seen this collectivistic trait in any way? For instance, when the Bolivian staff is working on projects proposals, do they try to include as many people as possible and look for the benefit of the most number or people or collectives rather than just themselves?

A: Yeah again I would think that that would be a fair statement compared to the U.S. let’s say that is more of an individualistic society and focus more on glorification and the individual but compared to other Latin American countries, I do not really know, I can’t really place Bolivia somewhere at sort of the International level, but compare to the U.S. I would definitely say yes that is probably generally true.

Question 9: What is the leadership style of Bolivian managers?

A: Again it is not necessarily our experience at my organization, I really do not know if that is true or not and in general in Bolivia is not our experience but part of it is that we go to, we try to address those issues in Bolivia and in every country that we work such that you know we can, if that is the cultural norm then improve on the cultural norm and make sure that we are getting towards transparency and accountability and sort of towards meritocracy…hmm obviously if in any situation there are a few have people internally who can sort of vouch for someone in a job search process or something like that. That has a weight and it is important to have people, you know well respected people to sort of vouch for or support other people from outside in terms of gaining access to employment or opportunities within the organization, I think that is how every organization works but I mean again we go to great lengths as an International non profit in Bolivia to not end up with a situation where we have a lot of nepotism and a lot of you know some of the issues that you addressed. Again, in general I do not know and my intuition is that compare to the United States, yes it is probably more prevalent in Bolivia, but one of the challenges in general is that you have, I mean the United States has 300 million people and you have a lot of those 25%-30% of people have college education and this and that so you have sort of this big pool to draw from whereas in Bolivia and other smaller countries in general you have a smaller pool and so what might be perceived sort of as nepotism or as favoritism is just sort of a reflection that is a much smaller place were most people or a lot of people know each other and have some sort of affiliation with each other, whether it is that they went to the same school or they belong to some group or they are actually family members are connected through a friend or whatever that would be more prevalent than hiring somebody in any state of the United States, 5
million people from all over the United States who have had different experiences and different relationships in groups and you have more people in a talent pool to choose from. So what I am saying is that there is a smaller pool of people who are qualified and that there is a higher likelihood that those people know each other so it is not necessarily that they are hiring someone who is not qualified it is just that whoever would be qualified is your friend or you would probably know them.

**Question 10: Do Bolivian managers have a long-time orientation?**

A: well I mean I do not know. I guess I cannot really comment on that. I guess in general you know who are we talking about here, I mean if you have people who are sort of extremely poor in the Andean highlands who are hungry, then I do not think those people are necessarily, and you know that can be the case in Haiti or Guatemala or somewhere in Africa, whatever, I don’t think that those people are sort of necessarily thinking about the very long term whereas the upper middle class in the urban areas who again have access to education might have sort of a yes perspective in terms of a longer term perspective so I think it’s yeah. And one of the characteristics that is common in Latin American societies is the issue of inequity. When you have certain segments of the population living in extreme poverty and very rustic or primitive conditions and that others segments of the population are living at a material quality of life similar to wealthy people in the United States or wherever in the world so I mean again it is sort of difficult to answer that question in terms of who exactly we are talking about.

**Question 11: Do Bolivian managers have a polychronic time orientation?**

A: I do not know, I cannot answer most of that question my perception is that Bolivians are punctual and that there is not much of the mañana culture that is more of a problem in the Caribbean or other places.

Q: In this regard and about the time management, how good do you think Bolivians are with meeting deadlines?

A: I think they are very good.

**Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?**

A: Email and the language depends on whom I am writing to so it is either in Spanish or English.

**Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?**

A: I mean it depends on the person, but I find it relatively easy.

**Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the Bolivian managers?**

A: Yes definitely if whatever is going on it’s in English and the reason that the things are in English at times in our organization is that you would involve somebody who is not you know a non-Spanish speaker, so you have to switch to English or vice-versa. Not with me personally, but with certain people yes there are some issues. But we do have somebody in our Bolivian office that speaks English so that makes it easier.
Q: So are they like the missing link?
A: Yeah but I mean you know that in learning English and if Spanish is your native language but obviously it is difficult to translate and you lose some of whatever you are trying to translate.

Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?

A: Yes, again I think one of the things that above and beyond cultural practices, I think that some of the logistical or practical realities affect procurement processes. You can think of our organization or other international NGOs as sort of like multinational organizations or corporations or whatever so we have a lot of standards around procurement practices so we end up sort of with a hybrid of following policies that are sort of international policies, they are international developed and respected policies and then you know implementing those policies in the Bolivian context, so obviously yes it affects it. I think for the most part is not like we cram everything down in people’s throats like this is our policy and you must follow it at all times etc. etc. but I mean to ensure that we have certain appropriate standards from an audit stand point and from an effective management stand point yes we have those, and then the issue becomes again, I would say more of a...you know somewhat of a cultural issue and then more of a logistical issue around just been able to effectively be able to implement them in all cases.

Q: That is very interesting because that could also...like you said...there is a lot of standards when it comes to this grants and all of these policies so you need to make sure you follow them so if you get audited you are fine. But then that doesn’t necessarily mean or show the true picture of the projects in Bolivia.
A: Yes, the other reality is if you have a grant from the United Nations or the European Union or the U.S. government, they all have their own policy around procurement, around reporting and audits and all of that so you beholding more of to sort of like donor standards than you would like to be at any given time. So a lot of times it is definitely not in ours...is sort of more, they is not much lead way or room to vary from whatever your donor’s policies are.

Interview 5: April 18th, 2008

Question 1: What traits do Bolivian managers share?

A: Yeah I mean, I think my actions are a little bit limited so my experiences are hence a little bit limited. But I would say that some of these things are definitely true, especially when it comes to the tardiness and maybe some of the not writing memos and things like that, those can at times make things a little bit more difficult to work in.

Q: So, have you seen any of these aspects affecting the procurement or development of projects in Bolivia?
A: Yeah, we have one small project from Bolivia that we can say was very affected by this because we were just starting it, and we were trying to...we were going back and forth with email and phones and there was a Bolivian gentleman who was supposed to be getting it up and going, so it was not happening, it was not happening, so I went down last year in March and May. In March it was eminent that he was not getting it done, so when I went back in May I met with him again and then we finally got things going. But it seems like there was a lot of contending minds and a lot of disorganization, and I wouldn’t necessarily say that there were things like pulling favors or combining personal and professional. I wouldn’t say it was necessarily that, it was just a matter of hate to kind of be going back and forth on things and
wasn’t very good about communication and would constantly forget, so those are more of the issues that we are dealing with in trying to get the project going. Basically all of these things have delayed the project.

**Question 2: Do Bolivian managers have a high-context culture?**

**A:** yeah, I don’t think that I could give you a very good example but I definitely have gotten that vibe, that they assumed that you catch the subtleties of the conversation and sometimes you don’t, and there are instances that I can definitely pick up on that, but there are things that they are not saying that I think they are expecting me to understand but maybe don’t, and occasionally I do understand what they are getting at but there has definitely been times where I think maybe I have come across as been a little bit too pushy to get certain information out of them because I am not understanding what is implied. So they would assume that I know what they are talking about.

**Question 3 and 4: What are the communication patterns and meeting style of Bolivian managers?**

**A:** Yeah, when I went there just last year, I went to a number of inaugurations and different meetings like that, so there were a variety of Bolivians and in a few of them I was the only American, and I say yes I noticed that trait too that they kind of kick around ideas and that, you know… I mean… I guess that in my opinion I can tell just by listening to them that it is probably not actually going to happen, and there is definitely a lot of chit chat, small talk and then it seems like kind of in a mix venue you slip in the meat of what you are actually trying to figure out and then you go on.

**Q:** So do you feel as though you have to be bringing people back to the topic?

**A:** I really think that it depends on the person. I think that some people are very accurate and are very good at staying on task and other people are just all over the place, so I would say that it is hard to say that it goes exactly one way or the other, I think that it’s kind of a person to person basis but I would say that in general you do kind of have to try to keep things on track.

**Q:** So how do you think this aspect impacts the execution and development of projects in Bolivia?

**A:** I think it is more of a delay than anything, and sometimes you sense that the delay might be a little bit of a stretch because in reality it is just something that is kind of protocol and you kind of expected going into these sort of situations, that this is what you are going to have to do in order to get the ball rolling. I guess in terms of gringos, it can be perceived as a delay but I guess in my experience working in Latin America is something that you come to expect. At this point, I do not really see it as annoyance, I just see it as it a kind of cultural thing that you have to do.

**Question 5: Do Bolivian managers have a high-power distance culture?**

**A:** Definitely. That is really true. For instance, I have lived in other parts of Latin America and the Caribbean, and I never got that perception as much, whereas in Bolivia I definitely noticed a difference, even just in my contact with the field staff in Bolivia, I mean I do not consider myself a superior or a boss, but I get emails from people who I actually interacted with, and I don’t expect, notice the I don’t expect, some sort of hierarchy to this, but I get emails saying “Estimado Jefe” (Dear Boss) and things like that, that I should wouldn’t… that for me seem a
little weird because I think I am just not used to that form of a hierarchy and it is something that I definitely see accentuated in the working with the Bolivian than working with Paraguay for instance, and that does not exist, or at least not to the extent that it does in Bolivia.

**Q:** Do you think this hierarchy that you mention affects the way people approach you? For instance, a field director who refers to you as his boss, do you think he is open to give you any suggestions regardless of the fact that he or she sees you as his/her boss?

**A:** I mean to say that it affects the implementation of the project not necessarily, but I mean in terms of, if they would feel comfortable talking to me about an issue that they would like to see resolved or address or things like that I can see where there would be some issues. I do not feel like there is as much of a sense of “confianza”, I see it more as respect. It is respect but they do not have that trust or that confianza to come and talk to me if there is a problem. But if they did, I think they would do it in a very subtle way.

**Q:** How about when you are trying to get information from the Bolivian staff who are not the country director…do you think it takes long to get it because it has to go through the country director? Or do you not see a difference?

**A:** Generally I get it directly from them, but it’s kind of a mix. But I think that basically the kind of protocol that we established is that it doesn’t have to go through the boss directly to me, but their boss needs to be copied on the email. So the boss is aware of what’s going on, so that way we are not stepping out of the sound of hierarchy in the office. In the cases where the communication hasn’t included the boss, there are times where the bosses say: hey wait a minute, I need to make sure that I’m on all of these, and he, she, I, it’s definitely been called out on it, and say hey you need to kind of respect the way the hierarchy is laid down.

**Question 6: Do Bolivian managers have a high-uncertainty avoidance culture?**

**A:** Yeah, I agree with that as well. I know that our, sort of our American staff members tend to get a little frustrated at times because there is somewhat of an inability to, as you say to think outside of the box, in situations that need to be, that we need to be creative so when there is a good set of rules that has been established they poise very well, but when there is some sort of unique situation that arises, or the rules have not been well defined, or the rules need to be defined, they tend to struggle. I know that I have dealt with that in some unique accounting situations, and some unique procurement situations, and so I would say that not only hearing it from our American staff living in Bolivia, but also from my own experience I can say that is definitely true.

**Q:** And when you say that this aspect affects projects, what did you mean by that?

**A:** Just same thing, it slows it down. It is definitely something we have always gone through, but you kind of have to come up with the rules and develop some sort of system that they can work in, and then they are fine. But you know there are times where you need to give them a lot of guidance. I mean not to make it sound like they do not know how to make anything because that is not at all the case but there have been situations where they seem like they just can’t or aren’t able to get through without getting more guidance, and so that tends to push work on to other people which slows things down and it has some certain effects.

**Question 7: Do Bolivian managers have a collectivistic culture?**

**A:** That is kind of hard. I do not know if I have enough experience to say definitively. I wouldn’t say that I have any good examples, but to an extent I would agree with it, I think my
examples would be on more in the terms of things that I’ve read, or I’ve seen on the news, but directly and how they relate to our projects, not really, I can’t say I have seen it.

Questions 8: Do Bolivian managers have a vertical collectivistic culture?

A: Yeah I mean I would say that is true. I know that last year when I was there, I played on a volleyball team that they had set up and it’s a little volleyball league and there were seven different teams within the office and everyone was very collective in a sense that everyone was having fun, playing together and it didn’t matter if you were the Project Director or the driver, or the cleaning person, it didn’t matter what level you were on, everyone just worked together and had a good time, but at the same time you saw that, even though they were having a good time, they still respected the people that were sort of higher in the food chain if you will, that they still respected those ranks. Basically yeah, I have definitely seen that.

Question 9: What is the leadership style of Bolivian managers?

A: Yeah I mean I guess what I would say about our office in Bolivia is that we have a number of employees who are married, or maybe it’s a father and a son, so I have seen that, but to say that that person was hired because they are related, not necessarily. I mean the way that we have it set up, the father would have never been able to hire a comrade or his son, whatever the case may be. You know you see that they watch out for each other, and they definitely push for making sure that their family is taken care of too.

Q: So you wouldn’t say that they got hired because they were relatives but because they were qualified?

A: Right, but at the same time, if they hear about an opening they say oh you know my son isn’t working right now and maybe he could do that you know they definitely watch out for their family. Whereas in the case of the U.S. the first thing I wouldn’t think of is oh my brother is looking for a job, you know like, because I know that they are hiring somebody but maybe you know somebody is looking and qualified, but you know, I can’t say that I have seen like a horrible level of nepotism, but part of it is that I think is the way we have it set up and the way we run it is just not, does not put up with it.

Question 10: Do Bolivian managers have a long-time orientation?

A: Yeah, I mean again I would say that my experience has been. I do not think that I have enough experience to say definitely but I think it seems that way. It seems like compared to other cultures where I have worked there definitely seems to be a little more of a...I don’t know that the Bolivians I have interact with they seem to be very interested in saving and getting home and building a future for themselves, and they are less worried about if they have $10 bucks on their pocket, instead of going to spend it right now they are more likely to go save it and make sure that they are securing their future rather than just enjoying the present.

Q: So when you are trying to set up the programs, and writing out the proposals for the grants, do you think those characteristics affect these processes in any way?

A: I think so. I mean I have not been too involved in the proposal development, but the one thing that I noticed is that Bolivians are definitely open to kind of giving their time and again like other cultures that I have interacted with, they tend to, when they do these type of projects they want to see results immediately and they just want to know how they are going to benefit right
away. The Bolivians that I visited who have benefited seem very in knowledge and they are pleased with what they have seen on a short term but I think that they are willing to give time or money or supplies or whatever in order to make this project more successful in the long term. They tend to give a certain level of continuity that you don’t necessarily see in other projects or activities and when you talk to them they say: oh this is really great it is helping us right now, you know we are going to keep working on this because we want to be able to send our kids to college or we want to whatever the case might be but they, you know it’s not just: oh yeah now we can eat is kind of now we will be able to work hard in order to keep working, keep eating, and I am very impressed with them. Bolivians in general seem to be interested in you know obviously securing the present but also making sure that they have a more secure future as well.

**Question 11: Do Bolivian managers have a polychronic time orientation?**

**A:** Well my experiences are limited but I’d say that yes I think I have seen some of that. I mean there is definitely that of thinking towards the future but at the same time…[hang up]. What I was trying to say is that they are thinking towards the future but at the same time there are other instances were you go to a meeting and they know that I have to leave because I have another commitment and …go to another city and they say why don’t you can stay here longer and we can talk…[inaudible]

**Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?**

**A:** Generally by email in Spanish.

**Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?**

**A:** It’s easy

**Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the Bolivian managers?**

**A:** No, not at all.

**Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?**

**A:** I wouldn’t say these cultural differences affect the procurement and execution of development projects in Bolivia. I do not think that there is any sort of negative impact. I think that generally speaking, my impression is that there may be certain delays because of the cultural expectations towards you but in the end I think, and generally speaking, especially in terms of kind of the futuristic looking and some of the understanding of the hierarchy and kind of the respect for it, I think they tend to, they try to actually in the end they kind of facilitate the process because again you can make it work. Sometimes you run into cultural issues that just can’t expect from a relationship to work and to respect hierarchy and that is not the case with working with our team in Bolivia.
Interview 6: May 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2008

Question 1: What traits do Bolivian managers share?

A: I would say in general much of that is inaccurate but there are some things that I would agree with. I need to take one of your points that Bolivians frequently interrupt, and things like that, I find Bolivians to be extremely polite, very well mannered, very professional, and very polite. I think general, again, this is a little bit of stereotype but most Latin American countries that I know, including Bolivia, tend to be polychromic in their time management and that just means, I think it means that they are more interested on whatever they are doing at the moment it is the most important thing, so if it is a meeting with someone or there is something happening that needs their attention, a Bolivian will not stop what they were doing, cut short an interaction with another person or meeting or what have you to go to another schedule event in order to stay on time, where an American would. Unless you are talking with somebody who is extremely, extremely important, most Americans would say, you know what I’m so sorry but I have to go to another meeting and can we finish this later or can I send you an email? And I don’t think that would happen so much in Bolivia, so they are more likely to see people not necessarily completely punctual because again the interaction with people is more important than what the clock says so for me that is sort of the difference.

Q: In regards to what you were saying, how do you think those aspects that you were mentioning affect either the procurement or execution of projects in Bolivia?

A: Well, when you say procurement the immediate meanings that applies is the transactional extent of purchasing materials and…

Q: What I mean with procurement includes the time from when the scope of work goes out to the time that the proposal is read, to the time that it is developed, submitted, accepted, to the time the project gets executed. Basically all the work that goes into getting a project grant approved.

A: Well I think it can negatively impact things that have a timeline, like proposal preparation and development, I mean that is eventually where we will see the bigger issue and you know we definitely have had challenges not only in Bolivia, but in other countries too where you don’t received the input, and information that you need in a timely manner and part of that, there is couple of things. Part of that, is that I think that these proposals, or the vast majority of proposals are written in English and they are written, they are fairly high level English, I mean they are sort of written at the graduate school level English, so these are not easy concepts and ideas to express in English frequently, so I think sometimes what happens to is that there is this sort of time management issue that is also a factor that given the complexity of some of these things, some of the new themes are basically not, either people do read and understand English very well, some of the new ...(audits) and things may not understood fully so that could lead to miscommunication between people who are native English speakers, you know college and graduate school, educated, and people who understand English pretty well but may not be able to understand the complete nuance and everything of the details so I think that those two issues together can cause and have caused challenges sometimes.

Q: And do you have any specific example?

A: Sure, there was this big grant proposal due and you know I think that for example we had some expectations that maybe the consultant that was hired really understood what was been requested and what the parameters of the proposal order and what the expected inputs were and we made some assumptions, but I sort of think that he didn’t clearly fully understand the scope and what was required for the proposal and its probably a fact, I think it is likely that a factor that
was partially was the language factor, and that caused to ultimately not getting the information that was needed together in a timely fashion to get the proposal submitted so we cancelled it.

**Question 2: Do Bolivian managers have a high-context culture?**

**A:** I would say that Bolivians are probably what I would call medium context country so that if you got to start from high context to low context, America or Australia, they would be like low context where the situation, the setting, the people involved, is based on what people say is all that matters. And in a high context culture, let’s say in Japan non-verbal cues, situations, everything those things are what really speak and actually the words don’t mean much anything so and I would say Bolivia is sort of between those two points. Context is more important in Bolivia than it is in the United States where it is essentially unimportant, and it is really much more what people say. I think in Bolivia understanding relationships, and understanding what the implications are socially and professionally for different situations definitely can give you more understanding of where someone is coming from and what their real feelings are, so yes I think to some extent that is the case in Bolivia, but it is certainly not…

**Q:** Well, how do you think that plays a role in the procurement or execution of projects in Bolivia when this rules are not understood?

**A:** Yes, I think it can. In particular, it’s just again, Americans have an expectation that when something [is going to show you something] that that is the way it is, and that is not 100% true when you are dealing with Bolivians and these other factors to consider, so I think that can lead to saturation. Again, for the Americans and probably for the Bolivians too where they see many of the Americans been a little pushy and rude and unrealistic, and the Americans are thinking like the Bolivians aren’t managing it correctly, so yes that could happen.

**Question 3 and 4: What are the communication patterns and meeting style of Bolivian managers?**

**A:** No. If I understood that correctly about expecting to respect the national honor of Bolivia, no. I don’t think Bolivians are very nationalistic at all, and I can give you a good example. I mean I have had lots of conversations with Bolivians recently where they are basically saying that Evo Morales, who is the indigenous President of Bolivia, who if there is any president in Bolivian history that people should vow and defend because of his very indigenous and therefore very Bolivian roots, and they are like: Yeah our president is a conk and he’s an embarrassment, you know, and I think their, I first tell Bolivians that this is very much like what people are saying in this country about our President and so I don’t really think that the national honor is a high priority for Bolivians, any more so than any other country, I personally think that Bolivians are less nationalistic than Americans or Canadians who are very high in the nationalistic scale.

**Q:** How about Bolivians’ communication style during meetings?

**A:** I think that there are a lot of cultures where interpersonal relations are very important, people do start with small talk and then move on to more important matters, so but I don’t think there is anything unusual in that, in fact, probably a little bit more of small talk than what’s done in the U.S. but not necessarily, I do not necessarily agree with that.

**Q:** Do you feel that usually at the end of a meeting when everybody has already reached a consensus or a conclusion, do you think that it is eventually carry out?

**A:** Well, I mean, you know it’s hard to say. I mean I guess Americans would say that after three [inaudible] and then would apply that everything will be executed as it was agreed on the
meeting because everybody essentially agreed to follow a certain course of action, where as seen on some of the other things that I talked about earlier may need to tell [inaudible] in the execution, but I would say that when people reach consensus in Bolivia, they are certainly committed to following that generally agreed upon course of action as much as anywhere else, it is just that the other factors that may inhibit cross cultural communication and everything may play more of a role in having that consensus not be executed in those [inaudible], but I surely do not think that the Bolivians are any more likely than Americans that once they reach a consensus, to back pedal and not really mean it in a way that the Japanese would. I mean the Japanese frequently as for other cultures in Asia, will say yes to everything and they would totally agree and if you do not understand the context, you may think that everything is fine, and then you will find out later that yes was a way to not embarrass you, yes was a way to not, they do not want to have you lose face by having them challenge you, and say you know what you are full of shit, we are not going to do that, they will never say that because that will be humiliating to you. So out of respect for you the Japanese will say yes, yes, we’ll think about that, or yes that is a good idea, we will consider that, and as Americans we hear, hey we are good to go, but hey to a Japanese person that did not mean that they really made up a decision. But I think Bolivians will be pretty open about discussing issues and things, and when consensus is reached, I think they are just as likely as Americans to stick to what they said.

**Question 5: Do Bolivian managers have a high-power distance culture?**

**A:** Yes, I think that power is distributed in a more hierarchical fashion in Latin America and also in Bolivia. I think that, that is probably true, but I think that is changing in Bolivia, and it is changing in a lot of places around the world because in traditional societies older people, more experienced people, tend to have control of information and power and it creates a hierarchical power relationship but today with so much information and technology available and also that all of the technology and information is more readily handled by young people, who are since their early childhood you know involved in using the technology and much more knowledgeable comfortable with it than older people and the power is actually shifting to young people who can manipulate and used this technology and information, better and faster than older people, who are just having to learn those stuff from scratch, so I think that the hierarchical power relationship is going to be eroded from all around the world including Bolivia because again, as the world moves more toward information must from manufacturing and other things so I think the paradigm is shifting towards the younger people.

**Q:** So would you say that there is no clear social hierarchy in Bolivia?

**A:** There has to be a hierarchy, I just do not think that… I mean, it is hierarchical and I think that a good example of that is the honorifics that are used, for example: ‘Licenciado’, or ‘Licenciada’, or ‘Ingeniero’ or ‘Doctor’, nobody talks like that in English and in the United States. For instance, generally, People with a Ph.D. if they call themselves Doctors, generally people will laugh at them in the United States. They would say: did you go to a medical school, no but I have a Doctorate in European History. People actually laugh at them, right on their face if they say something like that, and would say well actually you are not a doctor, a doctor needs to go to medical school, so if you are not [inaudible] so you are a John, so but in Latin America, if you have a Bachelor’s Degree or college degree, people use that honorific when they make introductions and things like that, which is to an American very unusual. To me that is just full long example of the fact that education status in that country is much more scattered pattern.
[inaudible] and embedded in Bolivian culture than it is in the US, so in general I am sure that it is true.

Q: And do you think that this influences in any way the way the projects are developed and/or executed?

A: Hmm you know it probably does and again this is pure speculation, but let’s assume that it may be that in that environment it may be harder for a lower level probably what I would call line staff, you know maybe like an ethnic girl or something who has been working out on the field so then she would be able to express a strong difference in opinion with the [inaudible] people above them about a particular activity, because again, because of the structure, where in the United States is much more likely that a floor man working on a project on the field if he sees something that he doesn’t like in a multimillion dollar project, he can pick up the phone and call somebody and say this is dangerous or we shouldn’t be doing this. And that generally, that kind of message is more likely to get through probably in the US, than it would be maybe in Bolivia, but that is a little bit of speculation on my part.

Question 6: Do Bolivian managers have a high-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: I don’t know. I see where that can be true in many places in Latin America but I can’t think of a country with more uncertainty on a daily basis than Bolivia. I mean Jesus! I mean in Bolivia you never know from week to week who is going to be the President. Then again, how many coups have there been in Bolivia since the 1940’s, I mean it is unbelievable. After World War II, there has been, I think only probably the Italian government has turned over more frequently than the Bolivian government, so there is tremendous uncertainty, conceptual instability, economic instability because the dependency of Bolivia on extractive industry like tin and things like that. So I think that in so many different levels Bolivia has this common uncertainty and so yeah I think that there is more, there is probably more uncertainty and things like that, so there is probably more inhibition and a little more overtake than we might have here in the US but I think Bolivians handle uncertainty pretty well. I mean, you see a few Americans freaking out about $4 gas and all those things happening in this country, and to be honest, I think Bolivians are more used to dealing with a lot more serious issues than that.

Question 7: Do Bolivian managers have a collectivistic culture?

A: I think in general that is true and I think you can see that by the long-term you know employment. I think that for example in our organization you will not see much turn out, I mean the only turn out that you would really see for the most part is related to you know funding shortfalls where our projects have a little bit of funding but I think they are much more likely to stay in Bolivia, people stay with the organization for a long, long period of time and if there are opportunities to move people to other projects or bring people back later, that happens frequently. And then in the U.S. people tend to view their professional career through sort of the skills and experiences they have and that is sort of their framework, so people do not feel very loyal to their company and the other thing is that companies are not loyal to their employees in this country so you know it is very very common for people to only stay at a job for 1-2-3 years and get another job that gives them a little bit more money, or a little bit more benefits, a little bit better terms, and I do not think that you find that so much in Bolivia.

Q: And how do you think this collectivistic nature influences the procurement and execution process of projects in Bolivia?
A: Is not like I think that it is really good, meaning that the procurement in our scenario is a little bit different because we have this international aspect to our procurement where we are actually developing proposals jointly or often jointly and then we have that intercultural dynamic, but let’s say for a minute proposals that are developed in Bolivia and by Bolivians and/or once the project is funded, the execution of that, I think that when you have an organization where people have been working together for so many years and they really feel that they are family, in addition to co-worker instead they have more of a family feel. They can really get things done and they can really work effectively with communities and other organizations because again their philosophy is built on long-term relationships and our branch in Bolivia has relationships with particular communities that they have had for decades and the municipalities and others so you know in that scenario where the communities have long standing relationship with the employees and the organization, they can be highly effective in getting things done. Where Americas, if we are doing business somewhere in our country, we will show up in any community and just go through process, like ok: the law says this, they say that, and our people need to get these permits and they do it, but there certainly is not that long term connection to project sites and things like that, in what you would call the procurement and execution that we have in this country. Maybe with the exception of corporate home offices, where companies are based for a long time and then they build those relationships but you know in this country, people will close an office and move it to a different area and they do not talk to anyone and there is no…I mean it is much more competitive and I think that in Bolivia we have long term relationships and thus people can be more effective. So I mean I think that is one of the positives of having that sort of social structure.

Questions 8: Do Bolivian managers have a vertical collectivistic culture?

A: I mean I think that it is probably true. I guess the best example that I have is that people want to support their member of their in-group of whatever may it be colleagues or communities that they work with but when you grow up or you operate in an environment where you sort of have to pay your dues, you know that in regards to the ranks and educational experience before you can have any authority and thing like that and you kind of suffer through that been when you are young and things like that, it makes it hard for you to give up that system once you obtain some rank and authority because you suffered through it and if you get rid of that system then it causes, or it means that you suffered for nothing so it does tend to perpetuate. Like a good example within the U.S. there is all kinds of research that residencies for doctors are unnecessarily brutal and the treatment by the residents of the attending doctors, by the residents, and their lack of sleep and all sort of stuff leads to bad outcomes for patients. And it does not make that the training doctor, better doctors right, you know it makes them kind of assholes and bad doctors but you know, when they are up for two days straight without sleeping and you walk in there it is very likely that they are going to make a mistake because they are exhausted, so this whole system is not a good system for medicine. But doctors have been going through that for so long that they are reluctant to give that up, when they are sort of in control, what it also means is that they would probably have to work harder because they are able to extremely push this young doctors you know of what would normally be required so, that system just perpetuates itself even though it is not a very good system. But in America, if you start out as a very low ranking technical person and you work your way through and you get your education and all of those other things and you get some status and authority it is hard to give that up, in creating more egalitarian structure…it is kind of like boot camp, you know you go through boot camp
and so that you do not want to just let somebody into the army without going though boot camp because you had to go through it. So you know I do not know if that creates a stronger comradely in working in group or not, I just do now know. But I noticed that, that kind of mentality is very common and if you sort of have to go through a process to get to somewhere, and it is long and painful, then you are reluctant to let other people bypass what you had to go through and that is just human nature.

**Question 9: What is the leadership style of Bolivian managers?**

**A:** I know that nepotism in general in Latin America business and things is much more common than it is in the U.S. I think we were doing this interview about our offices in Nicaragua and it was the most nepotistic thing that I have seen in my life, we got nepotism in our organization in Nicaragua. It is just astounding, but in Bolivia, I think there are a couple of examples of some nepotism there particularly with certain staff situations where, people who are perceived to be sort of favorite and have higher pay and terms than other people and so I do think that it happens, I think that at least in our organization in Bolivia I think that it is less common than in some other places but it is definitely an issue, and again I think that sense of belonging to or that your social group in all of these groups that you are part of, that you are definitely strong with, that encourages you towards nepotism and you know and there are some positives in nepotism in that you can trust people that have these other linkages with, because you know them and they will not necessarily violate your trust because of these other strong ties. Where in the U.S. we take the view, we are very much more rules or system based and so that is why we think that…we do not see nepotism because the system and the rules will protect the collective organization where as nepotism is often the rule used in Latin America, and in Bolivia is a way to strengthen the collective because it gives you knowledge, and power and makes people sort of have penalty for not supporting the group in a different level. In other words, if I hire my cousin to work for me, and they do not do a good job, there is a negative impact in the work environment for them and there is also a negative family impact where my tías (aunts), and my brothers will be giving them a hard time and saying: hey! What’s going on with you and blah blah blah so that sort of social pressure can probably be a good thing. So it is hard to say, I mean in general I am not in favored, not a fan of nepotism.

**Q:** But you say that in Bolivia it is frequent, that it does happen right?

**A:** Well it does happen, but it does not happen so much in our organization in Bolivia and I think that probably has more to do with our staff, and who is doing the hiring, and I think it has more to do with our Director there because of his academic background he is more process oriented, so he is not very nepotistic. Like I said in this other Latin American office that we have, I mean it is the definition of nepotism. Even a Latin American person will be surprised of how nepotistic this office is. So, I think the leadership style defines what level of nepotism will be tolerated.

**Q:** Well with all of your experience, how would you describe the leadership style in Bolivia?

**A:** You know I would say that it is definitely more hierarchical than or vertically oriented than here, in other words, there is less of horizontal discussion of what is going to be done, and then consensus and people, you know, I think the organizational chart is more vertical than horizontal and you know and that is not necessarily a bad thing as long as the blaze of the people from lower down the work chart is able to effectively move up and down the chain and I think it is fine, but if those, communications and messages moves one way you know from top to bottom then you know you have a problem. And I would say that it is not the case of Bolivia and again that is how we have to do with sort of the long term measure of the operation and the long term
measure of the employee where people have a really good relationship and despite potentially you know codified you know social structure that says ok: my boss “tiene la palabra” “has the word and that is it”, but because we known each other for 15 years and we are friends you know and things like that, I can tell him: hey this is what is going on, you need to think about this or you need to look at this. So I think that that sort of mitigates that stratification that long-term sort of family atmosphere that they have.

**Question 10: Do Bolivian managers have a long-time orientation?**

**A:** Yes I think that it is true and I think that they have a much longer [inaudible] and that they are thinking about the future, and certainly about maintaining relationships. Yes I think that it is true. But you know on the other hand, there are some phrases in Latin America that we do not have in the U.S. you know where people says: “Si Dios quiere” you know like “God Willing” it won’t happen, but I might get hit by a bus. You know that way. But definitely it is true.

**Question 11: Do Bolivian managers have a polychronic time orientation?**

**A:** Yes, I think that this is definitely true. In general, I think that over a long time horizon that, that all evens out because if it doesn’t get done today they’ll work longer hours and get it done tomorrow or next week, and everything will be ok. I would just say that I think that it is generally true that sort of polychromic behavior but over a long time horizon it all evens out. You know like in other words, if something does not get done today it gets done tomorrow, and even if it means that they have to work longer hours if it didn’t get done before, you know, on long term project it all evens out in the wash, it is all even. But in the short time frame like with a deadline, it could be a problem, because things have to be done at a certain time and in a certain way and if they are not done, well it is either they have to be done or you lose something. Like a proposal, it has to be submitted at a certain time and in a certain way, so that can cause problems because again, you do not have the luxury of a long time project to get things done. They have to be done in certain times in certain ways so that can be a negative. When you are on a deadline. But over a three-year project or something like that. I do not think is a problem. **Q:** So do you mean to say that the difference is mainly when you are trying to get a project than we you are trying to execute a project?  
**A:** Yes, and where there is a longer time horizon and there is time to be polychromic, because that means that ok you might have to work 14 hours on a day next week to get things done but is really important that you spend an extra hour talking to this person today, and that’s fine. But if a proposal is due tomorrow you can’t just ok it is important to have a four hour lunch with this person, you know, because my relationship is important with him, and that is when you can have a problem.

**Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?**

**A:** By email, instant message and phone.

**Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?**

**A:** I think it is pretty easy.
Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the Bolivian managers?

A: No, I mean, the only barrier is when I do not know how to say something in Spanish but I know that I can work around it and …

Q: How about when you are doing the proposals?

A: There is definitely a language barrier there for written communication, verbal communication and things, in email and things like that are fine but again in the high, high order proposal preparation when you are dealing with very complicated themes and ideas in English which I think 90% of Americans would not be able to do well, you know it is sort of like graduate record exam sort of level of writing, very specific, very field specific and it is not easy and so it is not easy for me in English, and it is definitely not easy for non-native English speakers so we do have problems with that, is an issue.

Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?

A: You know, I think that the cultural issues are less between the U.S. and Bolivia. I think the language barrier and real high order process is more of an issue, in other words if someone spoke English and Spanish or if both sides spoke English and Spanish at a very high level, very nuance level, able to write at that level both sides, I think the cultural differences would be minimal. I think that it does come down when people say: Language is culture and I think in this case is true. Those are the big issues but if we were talking about Japan, I think that you could speak perfect Japanese and still not have a clue of what was going on. So I think that it is the issue. Actually there is a famous quote about a guy that lived in Japan for more than 20 years and he said, the longer that I lived in Japan the less I know about it.

Q: I think that can be true with any country.

A: Yeah, but I just think that not so much. I mean you know despite all of our differences there are not tremendous differences between the United States and Bolivia. We are all sort of Americans in some weird sense, that we have this idea that we have been impacted by immigration, we have been impacted by migration in different ways and we all have this sort of weird some of American idea. Even though we know that we are definitely different but we all sort of got some fundamental things in common, where I don’t feel that is the case necessarily in say: West Africa, or the Middle East or North Asia, so maybe that is just my bias, but I feel like I understand Latin America just intuitively better than I understand other parts of the world, and somehow I feel that that is the case for Latin Americans too.

Interview 7: May 20th, 2008

Question 1: What traits do Bolivian managers share?

A: Yeah, I think in general it is true. I think most of them are probably true. Just from my interactions with our national office in La Paz, Bolivia, I think they can do a lot of things at the same time. I do not think that…they do more things in verbally, they are better at doing things verbally than in written, and get stuff done quicker that way and they know the right people, you know you get stuff done quicker. I mean overall, I believe that the Bolivians that I work with are extremely hard working and extremely dedicated to their work and can be extremely productive as well.
Question 2: Do Bolivian managers have a high-context culture?

A: It’s really tough because it depends. I have had experiences when Bolivians can be direct. I could probably see where that is the case, I’m just thinking of several probable exceptions to that. For instance, in developing proposals for USAID, a Bolivian there who has had a lot of experience in the United States kind of assumes some of the…you know, I think it is sort of what you get for someone who is been educated, perhaps I guess you could call more elite.

Q: Do you mean people who have been educated in the U.S. or Bolivia?

A: Well I’m thinking about those who have studied in the U.S. for a little bit, and so those who have studied here are much more direct than a normal Bolivian would be. I guess it might be as I qualified it, I think it depends on the educational level. You know, I think that is a variable that should be considered. I think the generalization is probably accurate on indirect communication.

Q: So would you say that the majority or minority of people would have this indirect communication style?

A: Probably the majority.

Q: And how do you think this plays a role in developing the proposal and actually executing the projects themselves?

A: Well I mean I think you have to get them on board with the idea, like if you are going to be designing a program, you need to include them from the offset so that they have a common contact, a common understanding of what the overall goals of the project are and how each piece relates to its other pieces, that way they do have a share of contacts, they do have a share of understanding and you can properly communicate indirectly with those sort of shared understandings.

Q: But in that sense you need to be aware of those “share understandings”

A: Right, I mean you have to sort of know going in… I mean part of it too it’s just knowing… part of it is just really knowing the people, you know, knowing the people that will be implementing the project, you know, you really need to have a personal relationship with each of them or know them well before you engage them in a particular project, and that’s how you can contextualize your communication style to each particular person.

Q: So for this question, I guess that you are saying that the indirect communication style wouldn’t matter that much as long as you know the person?

A: Yeah, I mean if you know the person well you would know how to communicate effectively with them, and you would know either you can communicate in a direct manner or in an indirect manner and there are effective ways to do it in both.

Q: So what happens when you just meet someone once or twice? What happens when you do not know the person that well?

A: Well the people that we have implementing our projects, they are people that either, well most of the folks in the national office know or the folks that are in our regional offices know, and I guess since our organization has a long presence in Bolivia and so know a lot of people, we obviously have a lot of contacts so you hire the folks that you know that do a good job, you also know them and know how to communicate with them.
**Question 3 and 4: What are the communication patterns and meeting style of Bolivian managers?**

**A:** I don’t know when they talk about the national honor. I think that is more of an academician sort of thing but, I mean you do sort of talk with them, you get to know them first, you know that whole book…I don’t know if you have seen three cups of tea, that is sort of how I would characterize Bolivian culture and I guess probably a lot of Latin culture. You sort of sit down and take time to chat about family and how they are doing, in a genuine manner, and then you get to business, maybe in an hour to hour later and I mean it also depends on the context of a specific issue, you know whenever you are under … I mean when you are developing proposals for USAID, we do not have a lot of time. You have a lot of work to do quickly and I mean part of it too it’s also people understand the context when you can and should really revert to normal communication pattern and when you really just can’t, when you are under real extreme time pressure, so I guess that’s how I would respond to that.

**Question 5: Do Bolivian managers have a high-power distance culture?**

**A:** Yeah I think so. I think that you have a very developed or a big sense of hierarchy. I think that you can see it in management styles. You do not see many flat organizations in Bolivia, like you would here like in corporate culture in the United States. Plenty partners that we work with, you know, you definitely see a very hierarchical sort of attitudes and structures. And I would probably offer to say that some of those tendencies exist in our organization’s office in Bolivia, you know real respect for hierarchy, so…

**Q:** And how do you think this plays a role in the procurement and execution of development projects in Bolivia?

**A:** You know I think I kind of…you know…I do not know because we are kind of trying to make our organization in Bolivia, the national office, actually going into a flatter structure, which I think it is very much needed, because with a hierarchical structure you have people who do not feel like part of the decision making process and you have a greater chance that they would sort of not buy into the program or whatever, so hierarchy can be good if you are trying to get a lot of stuff done quickly but it is not sustainable on the long term.

**Q:** So your organization is actually addressing that right now?

**A:** Yes, we, the national office is undergoing a significant restructuring at this point in time after a twenty years or so, and it is going to a much flatter structure, more kind of a matrix management type of structure…maybe not quite as far as matrix management but it gets pretty close, and so I guess that is one of the things that we have seen in our work and in our management.

**Q:** Do you think this hierarchical structure inhibits how much input people or other co-workers can give?

**A:** I think it does, I mean if they don’t feel like they have…you know if you fear your superiors then of course you are not going to provide key information. That is why organizational trust is extremely important. Trust between coworkers, trust between workers and managers, and you know, there is this whole school of thought on service leadership on you know the national director taking the attitude of humility and attitude of one of service, instead of: “I have all of this power and I’m going to use it”. So I guess that is the sort of model that we are aiming for in Bolivia.
Question 6: Do Bolivian managers have a high-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: I guess so, I mean I think they like clarity and rules and roles of people. I think that is important. I mean there is political instability, and I don’t think they like it necessarily. They obviously, you know, it certainly doesn’t help. Instability is not good for programming, because you don’t know what the government is going to do next, so in that sense certainty is good. Just like you would want to stay in a certain environment for business, I think you can say the same thing for development. Of course, when there is a natural disaster or whatever you have lots of uncertainty that you are responding and that is just how it is, you have to deal with it, and you obviously customize your programming and change programming almost on an ongoing basis but I think in general, yeah I guess our national office in Bolivia they do like stability, they like clarity in roles and responsibilities.

Question 7: Do Bolivian managers have a collectivistic culture?

A: I would probably say that it is true for the majority of cases. I think you also have a strong sense of individuals trying to develop their skills, their life skills and their work skills so I guess I kind of would say probably. You can probably use that generalization but you should clarify and understand that there is an aspect of individualism in them as well.

Q: And how do you see that aspect been reflected on the procurement and execution of projects in Bolivia?

A: I think you see a sense of team ownership whenever they are pulling a project together, but you also have to hold individuals accountable if they do not come through. So I guess that is kind of how I would see it, we…I think the Bolivians work very well together as a team, but I think it is also, or we also hold individuals accountable for their action and that is just how it works. And if they do not perform, then we have to take the issue up with them and maybe their manager.

Q: So in that team ownership sense that you mention, do you think they try to cover up each other? Like no, we did this as a team rather than really point out the person who did not perform?

A: Well, I think you do it. It’s all in how you communicate and the spirit in which you communicate. I think you can, and you do sort of whenever I go down to Bolivia when we have a proposal. I went down and congratulated the team on their performance. They did a very good job, overall there were some deficiencies from individual people and so you talk to these people sort of individually. You do it in a way so that they can save face and you do it directly, but also you are careful what words you use and how you do it.

Questions 8: Do Bolivian managers have a vertical collectivistic culture?

A: Yes I think that you sometimes see that Bolivians feel sort of entitled to respect and they feel themselves that they deserve respect from their underlings and I think I have seen it in a couple of our partners institutions in Bolivia where you see the project directors sort of very much…sort of very hierarchical attitude, that they are above the masses and they deserve respect and honor and people sort of go out of their way to do things for them.
Question 9: What is the leadership style of Bolivian managers?
A: I mean you don’t really see that in the procurement and oppress and nepotism for grants, in order to win them with the U.S. government you have to propose the best personnel and you have to send their CVs to USAID and so you are not… I mean you have absolutely zero incentive for there to be nepotism. I mean I guess you could probably see that whenever you are working with the government or private sector businesses I guess you would probably see some type of nepotism, but honestly I do not think that it would be that much more different than here in the United States. I mean I think you obviously have stronger familial networks in Bolivia but probably maybe a little bit more of nepotism…but honestly I do not think it is that much more.

Question 10: Do Bolivian managers have a long-time orientation?
A: I don’t know that I would agree with that actually. I think that they are very much formed by their past and it is still a very present reality. I guess I would probably say that they focus more on the past and the present than on the future.
Q: And how do you think this aspect affects the procurement and/or execution processes of development projects in Bolivia?
A: I think part of it, I think you see whenever you are trying to implement a public health campaign. People are not really thinking about their future, especially for their children. You know they are just thinking about how to get food or money for the next day and I think they probably want to think about the future and they probably do to some degree, but I don’t think it significantly informs their daily lives. They are very practical.

Question 11: Do Bolivian managers have a polychronic time orientation?
A: I think that you see that as part when you compare Bolivian culture to U.S. culture, I think you obviously it is probably true. I think you definitely have differences in time and I think that whenever you say that you are going to be somewhere at 6 or whenever they say they have a party at 6 they really mean 7 or 7:30 or whatever. When it comes to deadlines you really have to sort of say: “esta es la hora Inglesa, la hora Americana” (This is the English time, or this is the American time) and that means that stuff have to be done by this time and if you don’t then you are not going to get the money so…you know that sort of…I mean that is the project management you sort of have to play both. You have to be able to live by a flexible time schedule but at the same time there are times when you have to come down hard on them and say this is when it needs to be in and I got to have it by this time or else we are screwed. Q: Can you give any general example?
A: Yes, there was this proposal that we put together in January and I was telling the national office that we need the proposal done by this day, by x day and if you don’t get it to me by then, we are not going to get the money and they got it to me the day after the deadline, and I told them you know we can’t submit it so you are not going to get money.
Q: In that case, don’t you guys try to trick them with the deadlines?
A: Oh yes! I mean some of it has to do with circumstances outside of their control like power in La Paz went out all day the day that it was due, and there is nothing that they can do about that and you know due to a lot of other different strenuous factors they couldn’t get it to me before then, so I mean of course you do tell them: it is due two days before it is actually due, you know you do that sort of thing.
Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?
A: phone and email

Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?
A: For the most part easy and the language depends. A couple of people that I work with are actually very comfortable talking in English and just the relationship that I have with them we go back and forth between English and Spanish.

Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the Bolivian managers?
A: No I don’t feel that there is a language barrier. When it comes to proposals, they send me everything in Spanish and I translate it into English.

Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?
A: I think like in all projects, if you manage a project well…then if you do it from the beginning of a project if you start a workshop with a grant specialist from the States goes to Bolivia and talks to the key management team to go trough all of the requirements of the donor and from that basis you start a strong basic personal relationship. It can really work well, it works well. It is a matter of knowing how to communicate and the personalities involved. It is very general and I think that it is something to live by in any sort of development project, but I think knowing how to communicate effectively in an indirect and direct manner, I think from my level in the United States to like the national level, the office in La Paz, or the sub regional level, the office in Cochabamba, etc. effective communication and clearly defined responsibilities goes a long way and I think Bolivians do like clarity and they like to know what is going on. I also think they like to feel…I don’t think that they necessarily like a hierarchical structure but it’s just the structure that it has been embraced in their culture and that is the accepted form of interaction but I do not think that they necessarily like it. I think they do respond more effectively to a flatter structure, with more ownership more buying in. I think it also affects project’s implementation, the fact that you need to give, I don’t necessarily think that they think of the future so you need to give them something to think about for their future, you need to give them real hope and real opportunities both for the future and for today in order to be effective, and you need to be very practical and…

Q: so you do think that they need a lot of guidance?
A: I think that in certain aspect they need guidance. As far as how the U.S. I mean if I am procuring in helping implement U.S. government grants, there is a whole fluid of rules and regulations that they need to keep in mind as they are implementing these grants. They are not easy things and the government cash is way different than the private cash, and so they need someone who understands the donor, namely USAID and all of the craziness that that donor is and does and they need to know the rules, you know they need to be guided, they need to have somebody there so that they can ask so can I procure this item? You know does the U.S. government restrict it or not restrict it? You know that sort of thing. They need guidance on, and so far is really sort of implementing the project and designing the majority of the problem. I
do not think they necessarily need the guidance. I think the communities themselves know way better than I do what exactly the specific needs are and I think that you have a much better development project if it is design locally at the community level and by them versus… I am kind of a facilitator in the process, it is sort of I am a bridge between the donor or USAID and all of that world and our whole organization world of community based development and empowering local communities and so it’s kind of this balance. Understanding the donor and getting guidance on what the donor wants to see but then also really letting the communities themselves be the protagonist of their own development.

Interview 8: May 28th, 2008

Question 1: What traits do Bolivian managers share?

A: It’s funny that you mention that. Well I guess that my impression is that the times that I have actually worked on developing grants with them, they do not take so seriously the fact that you present a plan and then you are really responsible to the donor to execute that plan. The impression that I get in my experience is that, they sort of put down whatever they think the donor wants to hear without as much as regard as I might have for whether or not they in fact will carry it out. That is just my impression and whether that means that they tend to just can of do a rough sketch and not really pay attention about the details then I would say that it is probably true. And they definitely do several things at once and are not punctual. I think it makes it very difficult to do things on time, it makes it difficult to prioritize, I think it makes the management gets pull in too many different directions so the quality can sometimes suffer. Especially in, I mean I do not know about the private sector Bolivians, but in the non-profit sector the Bolivians that I have worked with and I mean I do not know how much is cultural and how much is of this is just because of the roots of our organization, but there is definitely a tendency to want to provide everything to the people we work with and very little ability to take a critical look at to what is actually feasible and where do we have to reduce our scope of work. And I wouldn’t say that their timetables are unpredictable, I would just say that they are not good at keeping timetables, so I guess that is the same thing.

Q: So, how do you think that particular point affects the grant proposal process?

A: Well, you know I have to say that after years of working with the office there, things have gotten better but probably one of the worst ways that it would manifest itself is that when they is a problem and there is going to be a delay there is a tendency not to say anything about it. Just to ignore it. It’s taking me a long time and working very closely with the people that are in charge to get them to tell me if there is a problem and we will work through it, we will request an extension or whatever it is, but to just go ahead and miss the deadline and not say anything or say why or anything, that is kind of mostly drives me crazy.

Q: And what do they say about that if it happens so frequently?

A: You know I think a lot of times it has to do with just having too much on their plate and it goes back to the other point that they do too many things at once, that is a lot of time the reason. The other thing is there is a tendency of this in the people that I worked with is to rather than really flag an issue when it is a serious problem, it is kind of to continue to work and…maybe it is that they are optimistic or that they have a positive attitude, but rather than identifying a real problem and say this is really going to cost delays and it is going to cost issues, there is a tendency to say: Oh we are working on it, it is going to get fixed or we are going to be able to
change it and it just sort of never happens. So it is kind of a general optimism maybe, or just not wanting to admit once things are not working.

Q: Also what about the point that I read about plans changing constantly?
A: In my experience, it is a little bit of not telling you from the beginning what the real situation probably was. You know, I am not going to say that they lie, but they don’t...they are not always forthcoming with the reality and I think again, you know I don’t know how cultural this is or if this is just a trait that happens between like a U.S. office vs. a field office but there is a tendency not to really present the full seriousness of a problem or the full picture.

Q: How about the point that says that they interweave social and professional life?
A: You know I have seen that a little bit, but mostly at the very top leadership level, you know there are certain things, and I again cannot really say that this is cultural because again it is very typical for someone who started their own business and that their family and their business it is just one sort of thing that they manage on a regular basis but the senior management sometimes doesn’t necessarily follow policies with respect to vacation or things like that. It is just kind of, oh you know we can go and take this time off when we need to, we don’t really have to document it, it is more like a looseness in terms of procedures than anything else. But I don’t know, for the most part the organization that I work with, they work very hard, if anything I would say that work intrudes into their personal life more than the other way around.

Question 2: Do Bolivian managers have a high-context culture?

A: yeah I would say that in general it is very true and I think that it manifest itself with some sort of communication problems, like the fact that they are not very direct can cause sometimes things that take longer than they otherwise might if you were just give a straight answer. And another example that I have is that I actually worked for a year in Bolivia in the national office, and when I was working there with some of the managers, a couple of times we had some ideas that we wanted to share with the director and they told me that I should tell her, because they did not want to tell her, and I would be like well you are ideas you know, they are great ideas so why wouldn’t you want to tell her personally, but they did not want to be direct about it. They wanted it to go through me and I always thought that that was so odd, and it made me wonder what happens when I am not there. How do you actually present ideas, and I do not know if it is related to this characteristic or not but you know not been forthcoming with suggestions and improvements that kind of thing it kind of delays the progress, and I think that there is a huge difference for education, I do not if that is a point on a following question, but it is just that there are so many levels of respect based on someone’s level of education and that thing and it seems to me that it causes bottlenecks, things could get done much more efficiently if there was better delegation and if people were not concern about respecting these lines of seniority.

Q: How about those implicit rules and their implicit communication style? Does that affect in any way the procurement or execution process?
A: Well probably some of my biggest problems have been not, because you know the director cannot do everything, I mean if you are going to run a project you have to have, you have to delegate some authority for some level of decision-making power at other levels or else you are not going to get anything done. And I think that in my case, that has mostly been the major problem. Even when I really made the point to explain that there needs to be some lower down person who can make some decisions, even if they name somebody responsible it is almost as if the actual concept of delegation it is not actually understood. Like delegation is giving people things to do, not empowering them with the responsibility and the decision-making authority.
Question 3 and 4: What are the communication patterns and meeting style of Bolivian managers?

A: You know that is a little bit harder. I definitely agree with the small talk stuff that is true. And then thinking about national honor, I am not sure I have ever noticed that. There is a tendency again to sort of make commitments that I don’t really think that they ever had any intention of fulfilling. And for example in meetings, and I have not necessarily seen this between us and our office in Bolivia, but I have seen it in meetings that we have where donors have been involved and they bring different grantees together, when we have to work on projects together, they are very willing to commit to things but then it is sort of like biting off more than they can chew, without necessarily been you know, instead of under promising and over delivering it’s the opposite. It’s that they over promise and under deliver. Q: Do you think they do this in order to get the grants? A: These examples that I’m giving you are more from after we get the grants, they have been through a midterm project kind of meetings or things like that, where we are trying to make commitments for what is going to be coming down for the rest of the project, little things like that, you know in terms of writing grants on the first place I don’t really think that…I mean I have only done it one or two times, so most of mine, you know, I don’t know if I can say that it’s always an issue when we are trying to get the money but I have seen those element come into play during the projects themselves.

Question 5: Do Bolivian managers have a high-power distance culture?

A: Yes, I definitely think it is true and it is basically what I said before in that people who are not, don’t feel that they are high in that power order, they are not, they do not feel, they just don’t participate to the fullest extent so I think the consequences is that the full value of the human potential is not realized. Because you have a whole segment of population or staff that don’t feel that is their place to contribute and so you end up not benefiting from the full potential of the staff. I will also say I worked a lot with my organization, but I have not worked that much with other Bolivian organizations so it is hard to know how much of it is because it is Bolivia. I don’t know it is interesting, I mean one thing and the whole issue of control and power goes beyond just procurement process, you know even in the evolution of our organization there has been a lot of struggles in shoes of where is the control, is it in Bolivia? is it in the United States? Because of the origin of our organization.

Question 6: Do Bolivian managers have a high-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: You know that sounds like something that jumps out at me as been, ha-ha, I mean if we were talking about Peru, then I would say yeah that is true but I can’t think of any concrete examples of how I have seen that in play.

Question 7: Do Bolivian managers have a collectivistic culture?

A: Yeah I mean I think there is some truth to that. They are less individualistic than other cultures might be, I mean some of the examples are that…we look to be productive as an organization, you know there are some issues in doing so with employing center plans that
reward sort of individual performance because there is sort of a strong emphasis on team and sometimes the individual reward system backfires because it can destroy sort of the kind of natural tendency to work together in teams.

Q: Now, let’s say for instance, that somebody did not fulfill their duty and when you are trying to find out who did it, nobody is responsible because they are all covering each other backs because of this collectivistic nature, do you see this happening at all?

A: It is definitely more like that. It is definitely…there is never a clear concrete reason for anything. Yes it is definitely like nobody takes full responsibility for things, it’s kind of…always sort of…it is never clear why things don’t work the way they are supposed to.

Q: And how do you think this collectivistic nature actually works out when they are executing the projects?

A: Well I think, I mean that could be one example or one reason, I do think that at least with our organization there is a strong social mission, so the idea that they want to provide as many services as possible to the people that we serve is definitely true. I also think that, at least in the case of one of our directors, there is just this anxiety to get money from wherever you can so in order to do that you can say whatever, you know even if, there might be a grant out there that says we make baskets, and that might not be what we do, but they will still say: we are going to focus on that, even though it is not really true. Just to try to get the money. It is just sort of there is a not a very good concept of how to be strategic in terms of what you choose to do or in terms of what you choose not to do. Again that could be total personality, I don’t know.

Questions 8: Do Bolivian managers have a vertical collectivistic culture?

A: Definitely. One other example that I can think of regarding the collectivism is when I was there, we were making some changes to this manual and I was working closely with this Bolivian guy and we presented the changes in a meeting, and there were a few people who did not agree with the things that we had done and I said: Oh you know, I understand your point that is actually my suggestion and I kind of took the responsibility for making some of the changes and then afterwards the guy that I was working with kind of took me aside and he said: You know I just want to tell you that you don’t have to take responsibility of that. We are working as a team and if they have something that they like about what we did then we accept it as a team and if there is something that they did not like about it then we accept it as a team. You know he was like you don’t have to go and take specific responsibility and I thought that was so interesting and at the time I found that to be very cultural, where as I think more in the United States it wouldn’t be so much like that.

Question 9: What is the leadership style of Bolivian managers?

A: Yeah I think that it is probably true. I have definitely seen lots of manipulation in ways that don’t seem to be super constructive or healthy. I have seen leadership styles where the approach is very charismatic and gain trust, sort of like rather than being a straightforward relationship, there is like this sort of relationship that is built, that is based on loyalty and trust and there seems to be this strong element of loyalty that even when someone leaves the organization, that expectation of loyalty is still sort of held there and the manipulation, the way I describe it, kind of like I’ll make you feel good if you do what I want you to do. Like that kind of a relationship, it is very subtle and is all part of the relationship but I think it exist.
Q: And how do you think that aspect in particular affects either the procurement or the execution of projects in Bolivia?
A: I mean it probably tides in a little bit to what I was saying before about efficiency, rather than just kind of taking everyone out in their merits and assigning roles and responsibilities based on that, sometimes things are assigned based on who is loyal rather than who is really competent to do the job, so in that sense it kind affect the outcomes of the project or the efficiency of the project.

Question 10: Do Bolivian managers have a long-time orientation?
A: You know that doesn’t jump out at me like something that I have witnessed.

Question 11: Do Bolivian managers have a polychronic time orientation?
A: Yeah I think it is true. Well two things, not just been late for things but completely changing them without paying attention to the fact that there are other people involved and that they need to be notified and then the other example that I have is where you are in a meeting with somebody and they are constantly answering their cell phone or constantly accepting interruptions so a meeting that would have taken half an hour ends up taking one hour and a half because they just don’t focus on what they are doing. They are willing to take any interruption.

Q: So in regards of how the time is manipulated, how does that affect deadlines?
A: Well, I guess also before they miss a deadline they won’t even tell you how they are going to work or give a reason or anything. Maybe that’s why, maybe it doesn’t even occur to them to let you know because the deadline is just there is not really set in stone. It is just kind of something that is part of the project but it doesn’t carry a lot of weight.

Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?
A: Well one thing to understand is that we have more than one office in Bolivia, and I actually worked in one of them, and in one of them all the people that work there are Bolivians and in both of the offices I have worked on writing proposals and submitting deadlines and I’ll probably have more contact with my own office, but I would say that with both of them depending on what the urgency is, is either through email communication or through telephone and all in Spanish.

Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?
A: I think it is relatively easy. I mean that we have Internet phone and internet chat it is pretty easy, and before that we just had the phone or email and it was just more difficult. Answering emails promptly is not something that you can depend on but if you could find somebody who is on chat is pretty easy to get their attention probably because they are willing to interrupt whatever they are doing, so in a way that helps, you know, it is a negative characteristic but in that particular case is positive because they will answer you even if they are in the middle of a meeting.
**Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the Bolivian managers?**

**A:** Well there is hardly anybody that speaks English but since I speak English and Spanish, I do not have much of a problem. Speaking for my organization and not just for myself, obviously the fact that we have some people that don’t speak Spanish or some people that don’t speak English is not great. That makes it more difficult. I think that the general assumption is that you would speak Spanish otherwise you won’t work with them. That is sort of the assumption and I don’t think they place enough value on those people that work in the International office and speak both English and Spanish. And I think they think you can easily just get around that with the translation but I totally disagree. I think that having people that are fluent if not bilingual, if not bicultural in both languages is a huge asset and I don’t think they appreciate that enough.

**Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?**

**A:** I guess, I don’t know. I am trying to think if we ever lost a grant because of any of these things like if we ever not gotten a grant. I think that overall our reputation has been hurt a little bit in the field because of some of these issues. I think one of the biggest issues is promising more than you can deliver. I think that is one of the biggest problems. You know most of the people working in development are sensitive to cultural differences, and you know they give allowances for missing a deadline here and there you know and not focusing or whatever, but the issue about doing too many things at once I think it causes, it has caused some donors to question when we submit a proposal whether or not is something that we can actually do. And I think that has affected our reputation. Then in terms of executing the project, there have been times when we had to write reports and just admit that we didn’t do what we said that we were going to do.

**Interview 9: May 29th, 2008**

**Question 1: What traits do Bolivian managers share?**

**A:** Well I would say that I would oppose to talk about the Bolivian culture, because we have the Aymara culture, the Quechua culture, the Latino culture and we have the Guaranís and the Gurayos just to name the most important ones and behaviors tend to be a little bit differentiated depending on where you are operating and what you are doing. In principal self, the aspect that has been directed probably applies to Latin American way of life where timetables and things like that, are not such a high priority than we have this in the United States or in other Western cultures. In this sense, I would agree that the time orientation is much more people oriented than fact oriented and that would be taken into account when working with Bolivian groups.

**Q:** So how do you think these aspects affect the procurement or execution of projects?

**A:** Well, I think that especially for the procurement piece, I think we just have to be aware that the culture here in Bolivia is a culture where relationships are important, where they are little favors, and little situations that are kind of favors but the enforcement is rather weak so if you want to have a quick procurement of more complicated things the question of relationship is not more important but if you have more time. On the other hand in other procurement aspects there is kind of a culture of contributing to the people involved, which means that what some people may even called bribery I would be a bit conservative with using this terminology but as a matter of fact for example if you want to have, even a prosecution process going on, the police is so
unequipped that you have to provide them with paper and gasoline and all of these things in order that they are able to function, so this creates a society a caifre a habit where it is very difficult to work 100% clean and it is important to differentiate probably a little bit in what is the contribution that allows people in the organization and structures to function because it just don’t get the necessary budget and what goes beyond this.

**Question 2: Do Bolivian managers have a high-context culture?**

**A:** yeah I think that is a correct analysis. It is very rare that you would hear somebody say that he or she will not be wanting to do something or that they want to do something that you want them to do, or then have them not do it. You have that effect that is quite usual, which is that of compliance. People try to please you when they make a commitment and they made the commitment when the intention and the capacity of really fulfilling the commitment may not be there, but people want to comply and want to make sure that you feel fine with their answer even if they know that they will not be able to fulfill their compromise, their duties.

**Q:** And how do you think this implicit and indirect style affects the execution of projects?

**A:** Well I think the main point is that you need to take enough time to talk with people and to really understand where they are and what they can and what they cannot do, so you need to ask enough in order to see where they are. You cannot just assume that because they say yes I will have meetings available or I have things available that they are really available. I only have to ask around and get the more solid picture about the environment in order to come to the conclusion and understanding if they are really available or is it that some of the people want to have available and sometimes is just until you go into a contract, you will see if it works or not. It just depends and if you ask is it important? I would say that it is more important to keep working with those enterprises and people that you know are complying, even though that may be a little bit more expensive than going for cheaper bits and then have all kinds of operational problems because the people or the enterprise do not fulfilling well their commitments.

**Question 3 and 4: What are the communication patterns and meeting style of Bolivian managers?**

**A:** Yes I think that for Bolivians, their national pride and to not lose face is very important, but I think this does not apply only to Bolivians, everyone wants to maintain personal integrity and if you have situations where it seems that you can lose 10 seconds of integrity in every country you will have problems. There may be degrees on when somebody feels offended in his or her integrity but I do not think that it is so much different from other cultures and the question of timetables and been able to fulfill, well I already mentioned this is that they have a different perception on how important timetables are and how important it is to fulfill the commitments.

**Q:** And how would you define that difference?

**A:** Well I think people who are not really used to work with time pressure and timelines you don’t get it to me today, you get it to me tomorrow and that’s ok. And very often I think this maybe link depending on the situation, if you don’t understand the dependencies from what flows into the other, and that if you don’t get something in time or if there is this negative neglected that you may come to the conclusion that it is not so important. So what I think is quite important in these processes is to ensure that the people involved get and understand the broader picture.
Question 5: Do Bolivian managers have a high-power distance culture?

A: I would think that for Bolivians is very clear that there are hierarchies and this is very normal and acceptable for them. They respect these hierarchies and they are used to working and thinking under these hierarchies and in an organization if you are in a superior position, you are not… even technical positions are not questioned as they would be questioned in a European or North American context where it is much easier to criticize your boss and here you need to develop a really frank relationship and you need to encourage your team to present opposite points of views to the points of view of the superior if there are any. If they are used to: If the boss says this, then is going to happen this way and even so they may have different ideas or even better ideas.

Q: So is that how you feel that this aspect influences the procurement and execution of projects in Bolivia?

A: yes I think so, because basically if you do not work these aspects intentionally then you can from a point of view of the superior you can just say this is how I want it to get done, at least they’ll need to have some optimal [recycling of everything] and throw it out the door people will think twice, three or four times before they tell you ok it won’t work this way.

Question 6: Do Bolivian managers have a high-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: Well I am not sure because in most of the societies you will find most of the people that do not want to ask kind of lots of [divided? Or the wisest?] Because you know not to know when it is a good time to go and on the other hand especially in a very hierarchical society like in Bolivia it is more easy to find kind of clear classic typical situations in the country where there is somebody who is even in a superior position of what this person says or decides it just dissipates, you know, so I don’t see that this is very different in Bolivia than in other places, at least I have not seen it.

Q: So for instance, how do you think they deal with the political instability of Bolivia?

A: Bolivia’s political uncertainty seems its independence. If you just look at the average length of head of state, this time is 4 compare to other countries, so obviously people are used to changes, people are used to blockades and all these stops than in other societies where you come first to Bolivia and you heard about it, all the road blockade over there, blockade over there, I do not know what is correct. I think that even for some people it might be frightening at the beginning. But people here in Bolivia learn to live with this kind of social unrest and with a certain higher level of unrest compared to a lot of the other countries.

Question 7: Do Bolivian managers have a collectivistic culture?

A: In general, I would think that is true. I think it is just highlighted and marked in the Quechua and Aymara society, but this is very important because in these societies is very difficult to move ahead or out of the communities. But in general, is not like it would have kind of significant influence to the Latino statement and then to a certain degree is a challenge in developing programs because it is difficult for people to stay forward outside of the comfort zone of the community and if you want to move things and you want to change things you need this kind of people. In this area, that is probably more difficult here in Bolivia than in other countries.

Q: How about when someone does not fulfill his or her duty, is it difficult to find out who did or who didn’t do it because of this collectivistic trait? Have you encounter anything like that?
A: Well her in our office in La Paz and in the other offices that we have, I have not had experience this but I am aware that in some of our rural programs that this is a challenge. Well there are also two things that I do not know if it has to do with the collectivistic nature or not. In one end if you have a team of people working together then to a certain degree for critics to come out people will solidarize in general but people will solidarize in other situations as well. That might not work that much if there is kind of peer pressure within the group, but I have not seen it in our offices, I think that might be something that you see in the rural area.

Questions 8: Do Bolivian managers have a vertical collectivistic culture?

A: Well I have not experience this so much and I am a little bit reluctant to say that is true or this is false.

Question 9: What is the leadership style of Bolivian managers?

A: Well I think nepotism is quite a strong word, and as a matter of fact as the family and friendship linkages are important and strong and as the [job] environment is weak, there is a sentimental responsibility in bringing in the kind of the group members into situations where they can benefit from possibilities that that person has, and that kind evolve into developing into nepotism and things like that. On the other hand, it is an exercise as well as solidarity within the group. I think that the point that we have a very weak environment and the traditions are very highly valued contributes to the fact that this is probably more significant here than in any other countries, but I am not sure if that is quite nepotism.

Q: So how would you describe leadership in Bolivia?

A: Well I think it is very versatile. People are and with friends links back to the effects of hierarchy, which is very well accepted and is not questioned. And there is where the obvious linkages and responsibilities that contribute that people want to do favors to members of the group and depending on the environment of the group and of the crowd these can be more or less developed, and that could have a more significant or less significant impact on the implementation of projects. I think that you just have to be aware of it and take it into consideration when you do your planning and especially when you do the hiring of people.

Question 10: Do Bolivian managers have a long-time orientation?

A: Well I think the Bolivians are very much influenced and formed by the past, they just look at the importance of some of the historic aspects that I would not consider as important, I would probably say that the past has a significant weight in what they do and in what they don’t so I have no conferred with this statement that they are more geared towards the future than to present and to the past. I think the past has a heavy weight in their decision.

Question 11: Do Bolivian managers have a polychronic time orientation?

A: Yes I will tend to say that that is true. And when it comes to deadlines, deadlines are very relative to people here. And that is part of the frustration in coming from a Western context. How can I ensure that people … well probably more people miss deadlines and how can I learn to understand better why they do it the way they do it? Because it is difficult to work with deadlines and on the other hand I do believe that can live with deadlines and that you can
improve the dealings of deadlines and get closer because it is related a little bit to the culture to say: “if nobody respects deadlines, why should I?” and if I do not respect the deadlines then I do not have any negative impact on my performance and on my salary or whatever it is, then what is the incentive for working with deadlines?

Q: So you are saying that the general sense in Bolivia is that people do not respect deadlines because other people don’t respect deadlines? Because it is the general culture?

A: Yeah. Deadlines are more kind of orientations than really deadlines.

Q: So how do you think these affect the projects?

A: Obviously you have to have, to blend enough, effort to say, so in order to be able to meet the deadlines that you really need to meet you have to put the deadlines for the official deadlines much earlier in order to not run in a lot of trouble. You really run into these kind of problems because people are a little bit optimistic in what can be achieved and then if they really have to meet deadlines that usually means that people will have to work extra hours in order to get there.

Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?

A: Mostly through the Internet and something that require telephone conferences and by phone as well. Most of the communication with the US office will be in Spanish, depending on the level of whom we will be coordinating or working because if it is a small operation, then the people that are link to operations in Latin America speak Spanish or some of them are even Latinos. If there are some more strategic or higher level conversations then it would be in English.

Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?

A: The point is that our organization in the United States for example is ok one contribute out of 10 people in Bolivia, so it is not, is one part out of 10, and we have not had any problems in communications, because some of the staff working in the U.S. office are Latin Americans and so they know the environment and they know the types of challenges that it means to work with Latin America. On the other hand, people come here regularly to see what is going on and to link with our staff, so I do not think it is challenging.

Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the Bolivian managers?

A: The language problem is that they have to speak English because it is very different. English knowledge of the Bolivian staff is limited.

Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?

A: Well I think you have to take these differences into account as if you do in the program, the planning of the project and the procurement, so in procurement you would probably do more checks and balances as say as you would probably do in a universal context. For deadlines, you would just make sure that you have enough time offered and enough space in order not to run into too much problems. I think that working here in Bolivia, [traffic wise?] you have to take into account the energy of the country and factor that into your planning program, planning process, for purposes of the procurement.
APPENDIX D
BOLIVIAN MANAGERS INTERVIEWS

The answers to questions 16-20, which were about the interviewees’ demographic information, were taken off this section in order to keep their anonymity.

Interview 1: April 3rd, 2008

Question 1: What traits do U.S. American managers share?

A: Entiendo que difiere acá un poco de las personas que trabajan en la cooperación internacional vemos lo que significa el ciudadano Americano corriente si vale el termino, quizá la mayoría del personal que trabajan en instituciones de desarrollo fundamentalmente social, pues ya han superado lo que significa el ser introvertidos también son mucho más comunicativos y mucho más desafiantes si vale el termino. Y si hay algo que destacar es el uso eficiente del tiempo que principalmente tiene. Y lógicamente como toda cultura está basada en hechos y en resultados, no en muchos sueños si vale el termino, son muy prácticos. Y lógicamente al igual que cada uno de las culturas tiene su particularidad en cuanto a preservar su privacidad fundamentalmente y la privacidad también en el hecho de no compartir mucho las emociones familiares si vale el termino. Es lo más diferente quizá en Latinos versus la cultura Americana y concretamente en las organizaciones en las cuales trabajamos.

Q: Y usted cree que de estas diferencias o características, se acuerda si alguna vez si ellas han afectado de cierto modo el proceso de desarrollar las propuestas o de desarrollar los trabajos o los proyectos en sí?

A: No, no al menos no he tenido oportunidad de identificar en alguna parte de el proceso de ya sea del desarrollo de una propuesta o de la ejecución de un proyecto se haya si vale el termino puesto de manifiesto que primero estaba ese hecho esa acción antes que cumplir su deber.

Question 2: Do U.S. American managers have a low-context culture?

A: Son totalmente directos osea no están si vale el termino como decimos nosotros dorando la píldora, sino que van directo al grano, y siempre han sido, puedo decir por lo menos con los que me han tocado trabajar son muy respetuosos en su comunicación pero sí directos. Lo que nosotros aquí mencionamos como un poco fríos, como que les falta algo más de calor.

Q: Y por lo menos usted cree que esto afecta de cierta forma la comunicación entre los dos equipos?

A: No, pero podría mejorar en estimular de mejor manera como llamamos el feedback esa retroalimentación si llega a cargar como algo de por ejemplo el agradecer o el felicitar, el estar conciente de que el haber hecho el esfuerzo ha significado todo el trabajo de un equipo contribuiría a mejorar esa comunicación directa de parte de ellos.

Question 3: What is the communication pattern of U.S. American managers?

A: Creo que es de mitad y mitad. Cuando se trata por ejemplo de celebrar un logro un éxito se manifiestan, pero quizás hace falta celebrar de igual manera los pasos intermedios que han
permitido llegar a ese éxito, solamente sería eso quizá la complementación para ir avanzando, osea no solamente festejar la…

Q: Osea si lo terminan si se festeja pero si no, entonces todo lo que se hizo en la mitad no se festeja?
A: Exacto.

Q: Y tiene algún ejemplo en específico?
A: Hay especialmente cuando hay la conclusión de los proyectos. Durante la fase de ejecución generalmente no se percibe, no se recibe una retroalimentación que vaya alentando los éxitos parciales que se tienen y solamente al final cuando sí hemos logrado todos los resultados, y una excelente evaluación final y una excelente auditoría, pero quizá falta complementar eso con los pasos previos nada mas.

Q: Acerca de este punto, usted se refiere a que esto solo ocurre durante el desarrollo del las propuestas o también después que los proyectos ya se terminan?
A: En ambos casos.

**Question 4: What is the meeting style of U.S. American managers?**

A: Generalmente, la mayor parte manejan muy bien lo que significa el facilitar una reunión en la que se establecen las reglas si vale el termino, y lógicamente empieza la persona a dar el ejemplo de lo que significa la reunión, trabajo fundamentalmente, quizá en ese aspecto lo único que se observa generalmente es la tendencia que tienen en algún caso o alguna otra de las personas que están participando en romper ese dialogo que vale el termino es en Español y empezar a hablar en Inglés directamente entre dos personas, lo que corta directamente la comunicación de la reunión. Volvemos otra vez a enfriar la reunión para volverla a retomar, pero ya habiendo perdido el ritmo digamos.

Q: Y en ese caso la persona habla los dos idiomas el Español y el Inglés y de cierta forma decide cambiar así del Español a el Inglés así como de la nada?
A: Sí, sí Q: Osea en cierta forma excluyen a los demás?
A: Excluyen a los demás y aprovechan quizá en ese momento para hacer una pregunta directa entre de las dos personas y sin respetar el contexto en realidad.

Q: Osea como mala educación?
A: Sí, yo lo tomo de esa manera. Más que guardar secretos sin saber de quien están hablando yo lo veo más como una falta de respeto, que no solamente se da en esa cultura también lo tenemos en el país cuando tu estas en una reunión con alguna de las comunidades donde practican o conocen otro idioma como el Quechua y el Aymara hacen igual ese uso. Tienen también esa tendencia.

**Question 5: Do U.S. American managers have a low-power distance culture?**

A: Fundamentalmente cuando tenemos visitas o evaluaciones externas de personas que vienen a ver los proyectos siempre se ha encontrado que la aptitud de estas personas trata de ser lo más igualitario posible y quizá somos nosotros quienes no asumimos esa igualdad vale el termino de hacer valer también nuestro criterio nuestra opinión versus la opinión que pueda tener la persona que está viendo a realizar un trabajo especifico. Quizás yo lo vería mas como una debilidad nuestra que un uso si vale el termino no igualitario de parte de los Estadounidense. En cuanto a mostrar poder puede ser que no se lo percibe pero si nosotros asumimos que por el solo hecho de
venir esa persona del Norte tienen mayor poder que el nuestro. Yo lo vería más por el otro sentido…

Q: Osea que ustedes lo perciben como que ellos son los que tienen el poder?
A: Exacto.

Q: Así ellos traten de no mostrar que tienen el poder?
A: Exacto.

Q: Y tiene algún ejemplo en específico?
A: Está en una evaluación por ejemplo que tuvimos para sistemas de aguas en los cuales estaba la persona que es un ingeniero con bastante experiencia pero no tomaba en cuenta algunos detalles que sí el técnico los conocía referente a la participación de la comunidad o porque sería mejor decisión técnica de instalar el termino del tanque de agua en determinado lugar entonces el técnico tenía todos los argumentos técnicos y la experiencia para justificar el porqué eligió instalar el tanque de agua en determinado lugar y no lo que le parecía al experto que debería haber sido un termino más sencillo hacerlo en otro lugar pero no se daba cuenta que había un cemento que podría complicar esa solución, entonces aceptó muy pasivamente esa crítica si vale pues la observación y cuando técnicamente podría haber demostrado y mantenido la decisión que adopto. Un ejemplo que para mí pues siempre lo he tenido en mente porque no respondía a lo que era el momento y la situación. Y llegó a salir en el documento final de la evaluación.

Question 6: Do U.S. American managers have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: No creo que son. Como decíamos son bastantes prácticos en el hecho de cómo saber en que nivel tenemos certeza y en que otros momentos existe la incertidumbre. Nosotros quizás disfrazamos el termino de la incertidumbre con el sueño, osea somos muy soñadores, muy idealistas si vale el termino. De ellos al otro lado la practicidad hace de que la incertidumbre que ellos la conocen perfectamente la manejan tomando lo que haz mencionados verdades absolutas. Hoy tenemos, mañana no tenemos entonces que hacer para superar ese hueco, ese vacío que se presenta. Hacen cambios muy rápidos que los median obviamente y no les cuesta hacer un giro si vale el termino, si ellos tenían una ruta atrasada y necesitan hacer un giro lo toman, no esperan como nosotros de que se presente un salvador si vale el termino por el camino no?

Q: Osea que tratan de evitar las incertidumbres al máximo, osea como que quieren tener control de la situación?
A: Si osea pienso que la mayor parte es de estar seguros de que pueden, opinan la credibilidad digamos de tomar esos cambios para evitar las incertidumbres. Son personas seguras desde mi punto de vista sobre este punto.

Q: Tiene algún ejemplo como que me pueda dar o no?
A: Hay casos por ejemplo cuando tenemos algún asunto con algún proyecto y nosotros estamos timidamente planteando alguna una opción de corregir o ajustar, aunque eso signifique si vale el término cerrar alguna actividad que no está funcionando y para nosotros nos cuesta tomar esa decisión de cortar porque siempre estamos dando o tenemos fe o esperanza de que pueda cambiar, pueda mejorar. Ellos en cambio son mucho más directos, ven que se cumplió ciertos pasos previos para llegar a esa decisión y la toman en ese momento.

Question 7: Do U.S. American managers have an individualistic culture?

A: Si creo que la mayor parte siempre tiene claramente definidas sus metas personales. Hemos visto en este momento una contraparte que tenemos aquí en la oficina de su crecimiento personal
de su aprendizaje que se hace en una institución para después proseguir creciendo en otra organización en otra institución entonces teniendo oportunidades de hacer carrera en una organización pequeña prefieren siempre seguir avanzando y creciendo. Ellos están concientes del tiempo osea de que el tiempo es oro y si no aprovechan una oportunidad que se les presenta entonces inmediatamente dejan de crecer y empiezan a cuestionarse. Entonces para ello siempre marca como un Norte el cumplir y alcanzar sus metas personales. Quizá eso los hace ser independientes.

Q: Y tiene algún ejemplo acerca de eso?
A: Sí había una especialista en salud que empezó habiendo terminado el ciclo de la maestría y lógicamente empezó en el área de monitoreo y evaluación y se perforó muy bien y después estuvo liderizando un sector si no me equivoco del VIH y de enfermedades infecciosas y había si vale el termino un camino para seguir creciendo junto con la organización, pero eligió el ir con otra organización especializada en ese tema, y lógicamente con una posición mucho mayor basada en la experiencia que había ganado en nuestra organización entonces la prioridad ya para esa persona era seguir creciendo y alcanzar sus metas personales y olvidando si vale el termino el compromiso con la institución con lo que hace la institución.

Questions 8: Do U.S. American managers have a vertical individualistic culture?

A: En media parte si aceptan y dan todo lo que significa la igualdad entre pares dentro de una misma organización pero siempre en algunos casos hay algunos ejemplos que escapan a esa igualdad que mencionan ellos. Está por ejemplo el tratamiento que al interior de la organización se brinda al ciudadano americano y al que no es ciudadano americano que para mí es el ejemplo no. Al interior de una organización.

Q: ¿Cómo así? No le entiendo
A: En situaciones similares por ejemplo. Lo que sucede es que mencionamos el trato igualitario o aceptar igualdades pero cuando se trata de por ejemplo beneficios. Estando en una misma posición una americano y un no americano se marca ahí la diferencia.

Q: Entonces ellos ganan más beneficios?
A: Sí, y los otros no tienen. Pero yo creo que eso marca más por una política de estado y no por que no quieran hacer sino que es la ley americana de seguridad social que cubre a sus con nacionales y no a personas de otras nacionalidades.

Q: Pero en ese sentido, entonces estamos hablando de diferencia de salarios o de beneficios como el seguro social y plan de retiro?
A: Si exacto en esos niveles de beneficios sociales.

Q: Pero también tiene que ver con los niveles salariales?
A: Eso digamos los niveles salariales dependen en función de la realidad en cada uno de los países, para mí eso no sería relevante pero sí lo que significa los beneficios sociales.

Question 9: What is the leadership style of U.S. American managers?

A: Sí, yo pienso que los líderes digamos están siempre comprometidos con los que están realizando y son quizá los mayormente comprometidos en lograr la participación del resto. Dejan bastante libertad, no son unas personas que estén pendientes día a día de si haz hecho o no haz hecho, o de que estás haciendo ese día o de que hiciste el día anterior. Te dan la libertad para que puedas asimilar todos lo que ellos te brindan para seguir creciendo. En ese caso hay ejemplos de personas que han pasado aquí en el país y que han dado lugar a esa participación en
los diferentes niveles de toma de decisión por ejemplo en el país. Les gusta obtener y lograr una mayor participación para que así la decisión que puedan obtener sea mucha más certera.

**Q:** Y esto es a nivel de cuando se están preparando o desarrollando y ejecutando los proyectos?

**A:** En ambos casos porque cuando se desarrolla la propuesta hay ese proceso de consulta. Son bastantes… involucran más de lo que nosotros involucramos en el desarrollo de una propuesta o en lo que significa la supervisión y ejecución de un proyecto. Yo digo que eso es una fortaleza que tienen ellos.

**Q:** Tiene algún ejemplo en específico?

**A:** Hay por ejemplo cuando se han hecho unos proyectos de salud prenatal hay personas que pensaba que todavía no estaban capaces para tener que desarrollar una propuesta y después liderizar su ejecución y en ambos casos han podido mostrar que otorgando la confianza estimulando la participación de esas personas se ha logrado, lograr primero la aprobación de la propuesta y que la ejecución de esa propuesta sea un éxito. Lógicamente con eso la institución, el sector de salud ha ganado porque ha logrado darle un tiempo explotar a esa persona, sacarle todo lo que tenía dentro. Se le ha dado una oportunidad y la ha sabido aprovechar esa persona. Esa es la diferencia.

**Q:** Entonces usted se refiere a que en la cultura Boliviana no se dan esas oportunidades?

**A:** Se dan casos muy aislados.

**Question 10: Do U.S. American managers have a short-time orientation?**

**A:** En cuanto al uso del tiempo. Para ellos considero que ellos son mucho más correctos de lo que significa el tiempo. Saben de que el tiempo es cualquier el tiempo del personal, de ellos mismos, o de la familia es valioso y hay que tomar, osea la orientación que brindan ellos es hacer uso eficiente del tiempo. Buscando lógicamente que ese uso eficiente del tiempo también se traduzca en satisfacción de la persona.

**Q:** Pero por lo menos esta pregunta en particular dice que ellos fomentan virtudes relacionadas con el pasado y el presente, en particular con respecto a la tradición y la preservación del orgullo, de la cara, de la reputación.

**A:** El siempre ha, estar desde el crecimiento, el poder mirar hacia atrás y ver que en el transcurso de el tiempo se lograron determinados resultados positivos o alguna debilidad que puedan haber quedado entonces. Por ejemplo, yo he tenido oportunidad en algunas evaluaciones de planes estratégicos ahí poder ver lo que ha significado el análisis de lo que ha significado el pasado en cuanto a los resultados, tiempos, aspectos positivos, osea sale esa tendencia de poder orientar a ver lo que ha significado el pasado para poder ser mucho más eficientes en cuanto a alcanzar resultados no solamente en costos sino en tiempo y en satisfacción.

**Question 11: Do U.S. American managers have a monochronic time orientation?**

**A:** Sí, casi la mayoría de las personas trasmite ese tipo de actitud en cuanto a el tiempo que es escaso, y como dicen el tiempo es oro y cuesta. Puede ser que por las distancias y las edificaciones donde ellos están trabajando, dónde se encuentra su fuente de trabajo induce a que ellos tengan ese tipo de aptitud porque reconocen que tienen un tiempo de vida útil, en el cual ellos tienen que asegurar su futuro y su estabilidad después de ser activos en lo que significa el mundo laboral. Hay siempre esa tendencia, quizá cuando salen del país, estando en un país donde se desarrolla alguna actividad les permite ver la otra cara de la medalla también, de que es posible evidentemente hacer un uso eficiente del tiempo pero disfrutando de la vida, en el
sentido: disfrutar a la familia, disfrutar lo que haces es tener satisfacciones de lo que has hecho tiene resultados con otras personas quizá eso es lo que nos puede marcar la diferencia de lo que significa el trabajo al [inaudible] o el trabajo aquí.

**Q:** Y cómo usted cree que esto afecta al desarrollo de proyectos en Bolivia?

**A:** Afecta en el hecho de que necesitamos mostrar e involucrar a las personas que están trabajando en las casas matrices la necesidad de palpar y sentir lo que es la realidad. Que ellos también se contagien de lo que significa el agradecimiento, el reconocimiento, de un niño, una niña, o de una señora con algún proyecto de los que ellos fueron parte de ese proceso, osea les faltaría que ellos también puedan apropiarse de esa iniciativa, no solamente en papeles sino en carne y hueso.

**Question 12 and 13: How is the communication between the national and international offices?**

**A:** Tengo una comunicación directa con mi supervisor. De manera fluida tengo por lo menos una conversación al mes con el directo. Tenemos un sistema de comunicación con el directo el VOIP osea no significa un costo y cuando estamos con trabajo de desarrollo de una propuesta o negociar un contrato o unos reportes finales, ahí la comunicación es también con el resto del equipo que realizan algunas tareas y después el uso del correo electrónico que sigue siendo para nosotros el principal medio de comunicación.

**Q:** Y es en Inglés o en Español?

**A:** Es un mixto. En mi caso porque estoy sigo en el proceso del aprendizaje del idioma Inglés entonces con algunas personas hemos acordado que todo va a ser en Inglés y en cambio con el resto de las personas cuando no solamente a mi viene la comunicación sino al resto del equipo pues lo hacen en Español. Podemos decir que casi la mitad o más de la mitad de la oficina en Estados Unidos tiene conocimiento del Español, entonces es una comunicación bien fluida. Es como 50-50%. Por ejemplo que alguna área hay mucha más presencia de persona que tienen raíces Latinas quizá por la proximidad que tenemos con los países latinos en el Sur de los Estados Unidos pero diría que el idioma hasta el momento no ha significado un impedimento para tener una comunicación fluida con ellos.

**Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the U.S. American managers?**

**Q:** Y entonces el lenguaje no representa una barrera cuando se desarrollan los proyectos o las propuestas?

**A:** No, quizá la barrera que tenemos temporal en algunos casos es que necesitamos la presentación de algunos documentos a referimiento del donante o del financiador en Inglés proveniente de la oficina de Bolivia, ahí hay debilidades en el país de tener traductores que puedan manejar el léxico de programas de desarrollo. Generalmente, hay traductores pero no manejan digamos esa lenguaje especifico de los proyectos ya sea de cualquiera de las áreas: de salud, de educación, de generación de ingresos porque cada una tiene su propio lenguaje. Esa sería digamos es una debilidad que siempre la vamos superando con diferentes alternativas, diferentes estrategias en el país o de la oficina internacional o una combinación de ambos, pero hasta el momento no ha significado un cuello de botella que nos paralice. Entre ambos buscamos las soluciones.
Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?

A: Fundamentalmente quizás es el tomar en cuenta que todo lo que he podido comentar, aportar, está orientado fundamentalmente a personas que realizan en los Estados Unidos similar actividad a la nuestra. Puede ser que el resto de la sociedad de los Estados Unidos no tenga esa característica pero en lo que a mi me ha tocado conocer.

Q: No pero esto es nada mas acerca de personas que trabajan en proyectos internacionales.
A: No mucha dificultad, salvo lo que significa a veces algunas posiciones como el donante, el financiador, digase la cooperación de AID USAID, que lógicamente están bajo otra estructura que ellos funcionan que difieren por ejemplo de muy pocas pero hemos tenido casos con personal de la embajada que es el polo opuesto de lo que significa la misión de AID en el país o los que vienen a la misión de AID en el país. Quizá por tener bastante experiencia muchos o algunos con muy poca experiencia. En el caso de la embajada quizás la ventaja es que son mas políticos entonces es mas fácil establecer una comunicación con ellos.

Interview 2: April 4th, 2008

Question 1: What traits do U.S. American managers share?

A: Si la gran parte si especialmente en lo que se refiere a lo concreto y a lo directo en el tema de textos. Gran parte sí, de repente hay también bueno por lo que veo por mi experiencia una tendencia a pareciera ocupar espacios que podrían ser familiares o de otra índole también con vínculos con el trabajo no? Esa sería mi percepción.

Q: ¿Como así?
A: Que mucha veces lo social y etc. Se interrelaciona también con temas de trabajo. Ver con quién te relacionas y cómo te relacionas es un poco orientado a una proyección laboral o alguna conexión que pueda reflejarse después en algún proyecto en alguna cooperación. Que por nosotros por nuestra parte tenemos, osea la gente Latina, Boliviana, tenemos una fama un poco decir de menos puntuales, más del corazón, menos de la razón y algo así.

Q: ¿Entonces por lo menos de las que le nombré hay algunas específicas que le resaltaron?
A: Sí el tema del ser concretos en los textos, el de ser puntuales. Eso de ser pasivos tal vez no. Pero si ensimismados, no pasivos pero tal vez ensimismados si y ven las cosas de su propio punto de vista creo que eso es común a todos. No solo a la cultura Americana.

Q: Creo que se me olvidó mencionarle que separan muy bien la vida personal de la profesional
A: Ahí justamente era lo que yo había dicho. Mas bien yo veía que no que hay un vínculo, pero bueno es también apreciación desde acá.

Q: ¿Y se acuerda de alguna vez en donde allá visto que estos aspectos han afectado a los proyectos?
A: Sí porque por algunos vínculos puede darse que se apoyen más un estilo de proyectos que otros, o alguna preferencia a un estilo de proyectos o una orientación de proyectos hacia un área específica en vez de otra puede ser que si. Sí hay un vínculo digamos con un tema de tecnología, hay más apoyo a esa parte que otra digamos educación es un ejemplo ¿no?

Question 2: Do U.S. American managers have a low-context culture?

A: Sí en general creo que está en lo cierto que bueno puede ser como se han formado también porque la mayoría de directores tienen un cierto estilo de sobre todo en temas de desarrollo hay
gente que viene del cuerpo de paz, que ya vienen orientados desde muy jóvenes hacia al ámbito de desarrollo y van como teniendo como ese tipo de cultura. Yo no sé si es cultura Americana en general o la cultura que apoya al desarrollo y viene de Norte América. Parece que por lo menos una va viendo como se perfilan desde muy jóvenes cuales son sus orientaciones y es como una cosa muy común, el recorrido y el estilo mismo de desarrollar las cosas en sí. Yo comparto bastante en general con esta última descripción.

**Q:** Pero si por lo menos usted fuera a describir ese estilo en sus propias palabras, ¿Cómo lo describiría?

**A:** Pues sí que es un estilo directo y también es un estilo que también se acomoda a las diferentes circunstancias o a las diferentes demandas que puedan haber en el mundo del desarrollo que se pueden llamar incluso nichos. No en ningún momento se pueden llamar como en el tema del mercado se pueden llamar aquí hay un nicho cuando se trata de un tema ya sea de salud, o de medio ambiente o algunas específicas se dice pues no hemos entrado en este nicho ¿no? Y no se llega de otra manera, que ya es bastante, bueno tiene esa óptica ya definida.

**Q:** Ya va, ¿dijo nicho o dicho?

**A:** Nicho es como una oportunidad. Por ejemplo cuando se habla en temas de publicidad se habla de nichos de mercado. Son como oportunidades.

**Question 3: What is the communication pattern of U.S. American managers?**

**A:** En general, es verdad pero lo que si he visto al menos en mi organización es que también hay una, de repente eso es más del individuo, pero también hay mucha dosis de la parte humana, de la parte humanitaria a la hora de decidir, pero en general estaría de acuerdo con toda la afirmación.

**Q:** ¿Tiene algún ejemplo?

**A:** Bueno se ve en lo cotidiano, en las conversaciones, de repente a veces parecería que no hay mucho espacio al interior de la organización por ejemplo para reflexiones sobre contexto o sobre se puede tender a vivir en una cosa donde se viene a ver solo lo que es tangible o solo lo que afecta directamente al proyecto pero por ejemplo en nuestro plaza en Bolivia están pasando muchas cosas al nivel histórico a nivel de país que merecerían de repente de nosotros como una organización que trabaja en Bolivia y para Bolivia que haya un espacio de análisis crítico y un cuestionamiento incluso a cómo nosotros desarrollamos nuestras acciones. Como una reflexión. Hay una ausencia de este espacio de reflexión y a veces es como que lo cotidiano se pone primero, lo urgente y se carece de eso, yo lo veo personalmente muchas veces como que se llega a crear una burbuja. Una burbuja y alrededor pueden estar pasando muchas cosas y la gente solo esta viendo solo lo que le afecta directamente en los programas.

**Question 4: What is the meeting style of U.S. American managers?**

**A:** Sí, en general es verdad aunque depende mucho del carácter de cada individuo, hay gente por lo menos que se ha salido totalmente del tema y se ha ido por otro lado pero en general si se percibe una direccionalidad. También hay este concepto de eficacia y eficiencia relacionado con el uso del tiempo que va de esta manera, en el ir a lo directo y a lo concreto y a conclusiones y tareas digamos.

**Q:** ¿Y cómo usted cree que esto afecta a los proyectos en sí?

**A:** Sí, un poco relacionado con lo que decía antes, osea, las cosas se pueden volver muy mecánicas bajo este esquema y no hay que olvidar que en el tema de desarrollo estamos tratando
con personas, con comunidades y sus tiempos también son otros. Sus tiempos sus ormenénticas, su manera de desarrollar y asumir las cosas son otras. Ahora también ellos conociendo esa lógica, se adaptan a esa lógica. Lo que no necesariamente significa que la asuman si no que ya han tenido generalmente experiencias con muchos proyectos entonces ya saben también como manejarse en torno a esto no. A Adaptarse perfectamente manejarlo sin que implique un cambio radical para ellos que más bien les afecte realmente muchas veces por eso se da una debilidad en el tema de que los proyectos sean sostenibles, porque muchas veces se solo apropián mientras los proyectos se están desarrollando y luego pues buscan que otro proyecto hay para apropiarse de ese mientras se desarrolla. Pero muy pocas veces podemos hablar de una apropiación real que implique que ellos mismos vayan a dar continuidad a las acciones. Nos hemos ido creo que para el otro lado, pero si creo que afecta el estilo de conducción y bueno y si reitero que hay una falta de espacio de ese tipo de análisis. No hay un momento en que se hable de la manera como se comunican las personas sino se entra directo a la comunicación sin analizar que puede afectar a los proyectos.

**Question 5:** Do U.S. American managers have a low-power distance culture?

**A:** En general sí, aunque también hay que estar conciente. Por ejemplo aquí, nosotros en nuestra oficina solo normalmente tenemos nuestro Director y Subdirectora que son Estadounidenses entonces ellos no siempre hacen hecho de supervisión directa verdad, sobre todo hacen visitas que no entrarían en el esquema de lo que denominamos supervisión sino sobre todo visitas de reconocimiento, visitas con patrocinadores, osea no es una supervisión muy programática, totalmente organizada. De todos modos es cierto, que cuando hacen estas visitas pues si tienen esta característica de que todos tienen deberían tener el derecho a hablar y ese esquema del espacio del poder; de que no hay jerarquía, sí lo tienen aunque cuando no hay trabajado más tiempo en el país, rápidamente también conocen como se estructuran las comunidades en los lugares donde ellos están visitando, que en el caso de Bolivia por ejemplo, en el área rural hay una fuerte organización comunitaria muy definida ahí se sabe claramente quien es el hilacata que se llama al jefe, y hay mucho protocolo cuando se hacen estas visitas. Hay mucho protocolo de que sea la persona de mayor relevancia para la comunidad en ese momento que haga la recepción de la gente pero también en el área rural hay una costumbre de tribuna libre que dependiendo del tiempo, la gente que desea expresar algo al visitante toma la palabra entonces sí concordaría con esta apreciación.

**Question 6:** Do U.S. American managers have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture?

**A:** Sí en general me parece que es verdad, aunque otra vez, en el momento histórico que estamos viviendo por ejemplo, en Bolivia se respira un aire de incertidumbre general ya ha nivel de la población misma que de alguna manera como parte de población el staff está también con esa incertidumbre se lo transmite todo el tiempo a la parte de dirección, pero por supuesto que en la parte de dirección y subdirección, si no hay la misma el mismo impacto que hay en la otra población, que somos digamos nosotros. Si se ve que hay un mas tomarlo con calma, digamos como que las aguas suben pero luego de subir bajaran. Que de repente nosotros podemos llegar a ser un poco mas apocalípticos sobre todo ahora que nosotros tenemos programas, gran parte de nuestros programas de cooperación que vienen del gobierno de los Estados Unidos entonces ahora a nivel de gobierno no existe una buena relación. Entonces viendo las noticias y todo eso, evidentemente hay una crisis, hay un miedo, pero los Estadounidenses piensan que las aguas van
a bajar. No es que ellos tomen las cosas a la ligera pero también te puede hacer pensar que también ellos como personas ya tienen mas opciones. Si acá pasa algo terrible pues no se acaba el mundo, se van a otro lugar y bueno ahí tienen otras oportunidades. Además también su experiencia por lo menos nosotros aquí tenemos un director con muchos años de experiencia en muchos lugares del mundo entonces no es primera vez que vive este tipo de situaciones y uno ve que realmente lo toma con mayor calma y si toma las cosas como que todo lo que sube naturalmente va a bajar. Entonces no hay tanto pánico, sino hay más tranquilidad.

**Question 7: Do U.S. American managers have an individualistic culture?**

**A:** Aquí diría sí y no. Diría que sí evidentemente uno percibe que hay personas que tienen su propia agenda y tienen esa característica de planificar en función sus propias metas etc. Sin embargo en el tema de desarrollo sí es necesario una vocación sino se estarían dedicándose a vender coca colas o güisqui o cualquier cosa pero sí es necesario el compromiso para mantenerse en este ámbito y en ese sentido el compromiso sí es en pro de una colectividad digamos. Si por un lado de formación personal y visión, pero ya hablando del ámbito del desarrollo yo creo que siente que en algún momento tiene la intención de hacer algo para cambiar el mundo en general. De repente esa particularidad a diferencia del resto de otros estadounidenses que podrían estar solo orientados a sus metas individuales.

**Questions 8: Do U.S. American managers have a vertical individualistic culture?**

**A:** Del tema de orientación por logros por supuesto que sí porque incluso esa es parte de la evaluación de desempeño que tenemos en las oficinas. En las oficinas nos hacen evaluación por desempeño y todo entra dentro de lo que son los esquemas de planificación y cuánto se ha logrado y porque sí y porque no, que se ha hecho al respecto, etc., pero una vez mas de repente hay muchas lecciones aprendidas que quedan en el camino que no se comparten y puedo decir que a veces hay esa sensación que, un afán exitista, osea de éxito. Osea como que quien muestre que está haciendo no muy, muy, muy bien va a estar mejor visto que una persona que muestre posible situaciones o posibles futuros conflictos o de repente que observe algo. Siempre hay una preferencia por quienes muestran resultados a más de lo que esos resultados ya impliquen en interacción con las comunidades mismas o con los grupos que trabajamos específicos. Y lo vemos también con nuestras contrapartes y financiadores que siempre van a tener mejores oídos para cosas que aparentemente son logros y no van a querer escuchar cosas que no sean logros. No van a querer escuchar cosas que pueden implicar un cuestionamiento al como se desarrollan los proyectos o a las maneras como nos estamos relacionando o a las consecuencias posteriores que pueda tener este en el camino, no hay oídos para eso. Tanto al interior de la organización como muchas veces con los financiadores.

**Q:** ¿Entonces en ese sentido, usted cree que el problema está en la definición de los logros?

**A:** También lo creo. Porque una vez mas hay ese afán por llegar a la meta sin importar como llegamos ahí y que pasa después de que llegamos ahí. Y a veces yo he visto casos siendo así esta cultura, las personas que trabajan en proyectos pueden a llegar a tergiversar (falsoar) las cosas para tener una buena imagen con el financiador o con los jefes mismos de la oficina. Osea acomodar un poco las cosas de manera que parezca mas logros que nada. Osea más logros que el de al lado. Son obviamente percepciones personales. Un ejemplo que me estaba recordando de mostrar logros y orientarse a logros sería ir a ver eso que mucha veces se inventan datos o se acomodan porque obvio uno quiere tener un buen precedente para futuros proyectos etc. Y eso
al final mas perjudica que ayuda porque no son datos reales para luego hacer una buena toma de decisiones.

**Q:** Por lo menos si se ha sobre estimado la cantidad de beneficiarios que se van a ayudar a un proyecto, ¿Cómo usted cree que eso afecta después?

**A:** Yo creo que afecta muchísimo porque por ejemplo en el costo de beneficios. Si yo digo he llegado a $1,500,000 por ejemplo de un proyecto educativo porque así demuestran los datos, pero si realmente ha llegado a $100,000 o a ya no exageraré a $400,000 entonces realmente está saliendo bastante menos costo efectivo. Osea no estoy llegando a tantas personas como estoy diciendo y de repente se está quedando más, lo aportes se están quedando en la parte administrativa o en otros momentos no están llegando realmente a la gente que tendría que llegar el apoyo.

**Q:** Ah esta bien. Es que no le entendía bien. Entonces el problema de sobreestimar los resultados es que de cuando por lo menos si te dan la plata para la gente que tu dijiste que ibas a ayudar, al fin y al cabo no va a llegar a toda esa gente.

**A:** Exacto, no va a llegar a tanta gente. O de repente podría hacerse otro proyecto que con el mismo dinero tiene un mayor impacto, pero ahí hay que ver porque si ha elegido el otro proyecto, de repente porque se veía mejor, no se veía mas efectivo pero realmente puede depender de cómo han presentado los resultados. Entonces puede ir eso a otro proyecto también.

**Question 9: What is the leadership style of U.S. American managers?**

**A:** Sí, bueno sí, en ese sentido sí bastante. Sería muy excepcional la persona que no deje hacer yo creo que eso sería una persona mas, como una característica muy especifica de alguien pero en general si hay esto otro de gerentar mejor y dar a cada cual la responsabilidad por su parte. Por eso yo creo que son muy escrupulosos en la selección del personal que van a contratar. Porque no lo contratarían si no lo considerarían que es capaz de responder a esto precisamente.

**Q:** ¿Pero entonces si siente que se le da bastante responsabilidad a los empleados para que hagan su propia parte?

**A:** Sí, se da libertad a los empleados para que hagan su propia parte pero ya luego habría que ver que entendemos por su propia parte, sí no? Pues ahí podríamos entrar a que las cosas se hacen mecánicamente pero si en general estoy de acuerdo. Un ejemplo, por eso yo diría que son tan escrupulosos los procesos de selección de personal y también cuando la persona no está respondiendo a la selección en el periodo de prueba se identifica y se toman decisiones muy rápidamente que se cambien.

**Question 10: Do U.S. American managers have a short-time orientation?**

**A:** Sí de acuerdo con eso.

**Q:** Sí o no o ¿usted cree que ellos hacen las cosas así sin importarles lo que piense la gente?

**A:** Para nada, mas bien todo lo contrario y es una de las cosas que he aprendido en ver como pueden medirse en momentos también que podrían ser de distensión pero siempre ahí está ese cálculo, ese proceso de cuidar la imagen personal, por su puesto que sí, en cada momento, y en todos los niveles. Sea en un ámbito de lo que se llama el hablar pero en lo coloquial también es importante preservar su imagen.
Question 11: Do U.S. American managers have a monochronic time orientation?

A: La primera parte no, y la segunda parte sí. La parte que se refiere de hacer solo una cosa a la vez, no la he visto. No la he visto en que sea una visión de hacer una cosa al tiempo no, yo digo mas bien que hay opción de ver varias, osea una cosa mas amplia. Si ellos hacen muchas cosas al mismo tiempo. Pero ya en el tema también de esta especie de apuro estrés y el uso del tiempo sí, por eso te decía la primera parte no y la segunda parte sí. Porque como la primera parte dice de que se ponen a hacer muchas cosas al mismo tiempo o que pueden estar sobre muchas cosas al mismo tiempo sí lo he visto, de que pueden estar sobre múltiples cosas con una atención múltiple muy interesante. También correlacionar cosas que pueden aparentemente no estar, estoy hablando de temas de proyecto, que pueden no estar relacionadas pero pueden hacer esos vínculos sí. Ahora con tema de ese afán y de ese apuro que el tiempo es oro y que no se puede malgastar, no es tan exagerado pero sí hay esa tendencia de que se vé como esa cuestión de que todo se tiene que hacer ahora urgente o mañana o ayer. El famoso ‘para ayer’. Ahora que realmente no es tan exagerado, pero de repente lo que yo no he visto es un tema del tiempo es oro, que el tiempo es dinero pero si el tiempo es algo, es un recurso muy valioso e importante.

Q: Le tengo una pregunta acerca de lo que dijo de la habilidad de los estadounidenses de hacer vínculos con cosas que no están relacionadas, ¿Podría dar un ejemplo acerca de eso?

A: Ah sí, a lo que me refería es que cuando uno está haciendo sólo una cosa al mismo tiempo puede ser que solo se está concentrando en eso por ejemplo un proyecto con adolescentes. Solo concentrándose en el asunto. Pero no más bien ellos, tenemos el proyecto de los adolescentes cómo lo vinculamos con el de salud, y hay una manera de vincular las cosas en ese sentido. No es que solo se conocen y entran y hacen solo una cosa. Por lo menos lo que yo he visto es bien interesante porque además se pueden relacionar cosas que aparentemente no tendrían mucha relación.

Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?

A: Con la oficina internacional como ya llevo tiempo trabajando con ellos, no es una comunicación la mía a requerimiento de ellos en realidad. No es una cosa que yo vaya a demandarlos, sino es mas el requerimiento de ellos cuando hay alguna necesidad una comunicación o algo que requiera información o apoyo entonces ahí generalmente es una comunicación vía correo electrónico, y yo me comunique en Inglés generalmente, por el tema de practicar. Ahora he visto que compañeros que les falta en el Inglés, que no tienen todavía un nivel muy avanzado, igual se comunican en Inglés con la oficina central. Me piden ayuda para que les ayude con sus correos electrónicos. Ahora una cosa interesante en el correo electrónico que no están en las preguntas pero me gustaría comentarle si se puede. Con el tema de esta nueva tecnología del Internet hay una especie de nueva cultura donde el Internet, y el responder rápidamente un email estaría reflejando eficiencia una vez más. Mientras mas rápido respondas eres mas eficiente, es como una especie de esos aparatos que te mandan pelotas y tu tienes que responder inmediatamente, es igual. No hay mucho tiempo, osea no está bien visto el pensar mucho las cosas, y por eso a veces se responde por responder rápido. Como que el mensaje fuera hacerlo rápido y no bien. Y se ha generado también toda una cultura en las relaciones porque es a quien copias, como copias, que le dices, y por eso como que las cosas ya no toman tiempo razonable como que es ese estrés y esta cuestión de hacer rápidas las cosas. Bien propia del modernismo, del consumismo, de por lo desechable también, porque es lo del dar respuesta, dar respuesta inmediata, sin pensarla mucho.
Q: Así no haya calidad.
A: Exacto.

**Question 13 and 14: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging? Is there a language barrier with the U.S. American managers?**

A: Fácil. Es fácil comunicarse en este sentido de comunicación. En el sentido de eficiencia si se entiende, pero una vez mas de pronto puede ser el estilo personal no lo sé, por la formación social puede ser parecería que se estén perdiendo cosas, se están saltando pasos.

**Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?**

A: Yo diría que no habría tanto bueno y malo. Bueno, yo creo que la cultura siempre afecta. La cuestión sería ver en que grado. Y sí tiene que ver con las percepciones. Las percepciones aquí por lo menos ahora con relación a la cultura norteamericana hay una especie de cuestionamiento muy fuerte, y seguro va afectar todo esto que estamos hablando. De seguro que va a afectar. Hay una visión de los nuevos órganos de poder cómo que de avasallamiento y como que de mucho cuestionamiento a esta cultura entonces sí en este momento.

Q: ¿Se refiere al antiamericanismo?
A: A por supuesto, ahora estamos viviendo eso a nivel de los grupos de gobierno y por eso estamos atravesando. Entonces es bien interesante porque el discurso que se maneja ahora públicamente digamos en estos niveles es anti-americano, porque a que les ha llevado esta cultura, se cuestiona, no se el cambio climático, estamos atentado contra las relaciones humanas, está muy cuestionado ahora.

Q: Entonces, ¿Usted cree que no se están dando proyectos por eso? ¿Por rechazar a la cultura norteamericana?
A: No solo la cultura, son también móviles políticos, pero la cultura también es un factor importante. Y bueno yo creo que los próximos proyectos que vienen sí se van a ver afectados por este movimiento que estamos viviendo ahora. Ahora mas que antes, está dándose este discurso, está renaciendo digamos un discurso que ya se había superado en los 70s. Ya se había superado este tema, pero ahora está volviendo muy fuerte. Además estamos a nivel de Bolivia con una exacerbación de lo que es indigenista, del indigenismo entendido como algo puro que tampoco creo que exista y en ese sentido lo que no es indigenista o indígena, no está bienvenido. Entonces por su puesto que esto va a afectar los futuros proyectos y a nuestro rol aquí y ahora, por eso es también importante que hayan estos espacios de reflexión, de análisis, ¿de dónde estamos nosotros?, ¿cómo nos planteamos?, ¿cuál es nuestro discurso?, ¿cómo implementamos los programas?, ¿cómo participan las comunidades?, ¿escuchamos realmente a las comunidades? ¿les imponemos nuestros discursos?. Es necesario que eso se analice, y no hay ese espacio. Entonces yo creo que lo histórico va ir desarrollándose solo y veremos que pasa.

**Interview 3: April 15th, 2008**

**Question 1: What traits do U.S. American managers share?**

A: En realidad no solo de los Estadounidenses, es una cosa general de los Europeos, son muchos más serios, son mucho mas formales y mas directos. Ahora, yo he visto un cambio en gente que ha trabajado fuera de los Estados Unidos, fuera de Europa por ejemplo, hay gente que ha vivido
en América Latina o en África o en otros países pues son un poco mas sensibles digamos así a la cultura que les rodea y un poco más…se conectan mejor con la gente por la experiencia “abroad” fuera del país que han tenido. En general, sí son bien metódicos, bien cerrados, bien directos y bien dinámicos. En todo caso todos estos aspectos afectan la mayoría de veces para bien porque los Latinoamericanos somos un poco más relajados, más dejados, siempre tratamos de dejar las cosas para último. En cambio, tener una persona con esa mentalidad nos ayuda para cumplir las fechas límites (los deadlines), poner un poco de presión, entonces las cosas se hacen mucho más ordenadas más metódicas, entonces esa sería la parte positiva. La parte negativa, es que por más de que sea un trabajo 100% profesional, siempre está llevado acabo por personas, por seres humanos, y a veces da la impresión que las personas Americanas o Europeas son insensibles, no son humanos, no se relacionan en equipo. Eso puede causar problemas al interior del equipo, del trabajo como el ambiente o clima laboral pero a los resultados de los proyectos en sí mismos no creo que afecten tanto. Por ejemplo, ahora último hemos estado trabajando con otra ONG Americana para una propuesta y habían dos personas, uno que era de raíces Latinas pero Americano y otro que era de raíces Europeas pero también Americano. El Latino al día siguiente de que se empezaba el taller, ya se llevaba muy bien con todos, ya era amigo de todos, ya estaba haciendo contactos, y relacionándose incluso con gente fuera del proyecto. Al Americano le costó un poco más porque es un poco más cerrado, más reservado y al principio era todo serio, todo seco, todo metódico y casi no sonreía. Después de las dos semanas de trabajar juntos y de viajar al campo y de hablar con la gente en las comunidades y todo eso, este Americano de raíces Europeas como que se fue soltando un poco más entonces ya habían momentos en los que mientras hacíamos el trabajo reíamos un poco, descansábamos un poco, y luego retomábamos y seguíamos trabajando, y eso ayudó mucho para que al final del proyecto todos estuvieran más animados, más contentos, y satisfechos de haber hecho un buen trabajo.

**Question 2: Do U.S. American managers have a low-context culture?**

**A:** Sí definitivamente son directo al grano. Ahí va un poco lo que comentábamos en la anterior pregunta, ellos separan muy bien lo que es relaciones personales y lo que es las relaciones laborales. En el trabajo te pueden decir cosas muy directas que te pueden afectar digamos pero lo están haciendo desde el punto de vista profesional. Sales del trabajo y eso que te dijeron es como si no hubiera existido, sigue siendo su amigo y no tienen problemas. A nosotros los Latinos nos afecta mucho eso porque mezclamos lo personal con lo profesional. Entonces incluso yo tengo que cambiar mi forma de conversar cuando estoy con gente Latina, que cuando estoy con gente Americana. A los Latinos les tengo que explicar las cosas con mucho más detalles y hacer mas vueltas. En cambio a los Americanos con cinco palabras directas y concretas es suficiente, osea no necesitas redundar.

**Q:** Y ¿cómo usted cree que estos aspectos afectan o influyen los proyectos en sí?

**A:** A ver…como te digo, muchas veces nosotros tratamos de hacer por ejemplo un inaudible papel que tiene 20 páginas porque estamos pensándolo para un Latino ¿no? Pero para los Americanos, 20 páginas es demasiado! No lo van a leer. Con dos páginas ya es suficiente. Entonces a veces tenemos o hacemos doble trabajo porque primero hacemos las primeras 20 páginas y después tenemos que resumirlas a dos y en algunos casos esto nos causa un poco de retraso en el trabajo, pero por otro lado, entiendo la mentalidad de ellos se simplifican las cosas. Si nos acostumbramos a pensar las cosas minimalistas y sencillas como los Americanos tal vez no tendríamos que hacer las 20 páginas. Pero específicamente como nos afecta en el trabajo, pues a veces tenemos que hacer doble trabajo, ya sea un informe, un reporte, un proyecto
para que lo entiendan aquí en América Latina y a veces el mismo proyecto no solamente traducirlo si no textualizarlo a la mentalidad occidental, y así entonces terminamos teniendo dos proyectos.

**Question 3: What is the communication pattern of U.S. American managers?**

**A:** Sí creo que es un poco valores culturales también. Nosotros cuidamos mucho de no lastimar a los demás o de decir algo que sea incorrecto porque vivimos mas en sociedad, interactuamos mas en sociedad. En cambio los Americanos no. Ellos interactúan en sociedad pero son sociedades extremadamente abiertas, osea tu sales del trabajo y bueno ya no ves a la persona del trabajo sino hasta la próxima semana o hasta el próximo mes, osea cada uno está en su cubículo. En América Latina, lo que tu hagas dentro de la oficina afecta fuera de la oficina también. Tus amigos dentro de la oficina son tus amigos fuera de la oficina. En muchos casos compartes transportes, compartes hasta en algunos casos vida social fuera de la oficina. Entonces por eso nos cuidamos nosotros como Latinos más de decir las cosas a las otras personas en la oficina. Los Americanos no, porque tienen la cancha bien rayada, osea ellos ponen bien los límites. Ahora como afecta esto en el trabajo pues muchas veces nosotros vemos a los Americanos como apáticos, como cerrados, hasta como malos ¿no? por la forma que tienen de decirte las cosas pero no es que lo están haciendo por malos sino que simplemente son así. Tienes que tener una mentalidad muy abierta para acostumbrarte a esto. Por lo menos yo tuve la experiencia de haber vivido en los Estados Unidos por un tiempo y de haber interactuado con gente de diferentes razas entonces entiendo un poco como funcionan por eso a mí no me afecta tanto, mas bien tengo que explicarle a mis compañeros, no lo que pasa es que los Americanos son así, así y así, entonces hay que ver como tratarlos.

**Question 4: What is the meeting style of U.S. American managers?**

**A:** Si los Americanos son muchos mas metódico incluso en eso, precisamente porque no tienen y no disponen de tanto tiempo entonces les gusta hacer las cosas breves y concisas. Por ejemplo, te pongo un ejemplo igual de esa propuesta en la que estábamos trabajando con esta otra ONG que es lo mas fresco que tengo. Nos unimos con un grupo de productores lecheros en el altiplano y esta persona de esta otra ONG empezó diciendo dos cosas: esto es lo que estamos haciendo, esto es lo que necesitamos y estos son los resultados que vamos a lograr y de esta forma lo vamos a aplicar y ahora los escuchá, y bueno uno de ellos empezó a decir que bueno nosotros somos una asociación, y que la gloriosa asociación fue formada en 1900s tantos, tantos, tantos y bueno hizo todo un discurso, y a los tres minutos yo ya veía la expresión de este otro tipo de la otra ONG y dijo pero bueno esta información a mí no me sirve, entonces la cortamos y vamos directamente al grano.

**Q:** ¿Cómo tomaron esto los dueños de la asociación?

**A:** Bueno el me lo dijo a mí, entonces yo tuve que mediar un poco y decir bueno si, nos parece muy interesantes pero lo que realmente queremos saber es esto, esto y esto, y bueno tuve que reencaminar un poco la conversación, pero osea nosotros estamos acostumbrados a escucharlos horas de horas de horas, que aunque realmente no los escuchemos pero por lo menos no se si por respeto o timidez o por protocolo lo hacemos. Pero los Americanos en realidad van directo al grano y quieren también que la gente vaya directo al grano.

**Q:** Bueno me imagino que para aquellos que no tienen experiencia con la cultura estadounidense es mucho más difícil.
A: Claro para otros es mucho más complicado. He visto personas que se sentían extremadamente ofendidos con algunos visitantes nuestros y les preguntas que ha pasado y dicen pues me han saludado y no me han dicho nada más, no me han preguntado como está mi familia y mi gatito digamos. Claro obviamente eso para ellos es irrelevante.

**Question 5: Do U.S. American managers have a low-power distance culture?**

A: Sí definitivamente, osea la autoridad o el liderazgo en la cultura Americana se lo gana uno por el trabajo que hace no por el puesto que tiene o la investidura que tiene. Entonces al ganarse el liderazgo de esa forma, al empezar de abajo, de ir ganando el liderazgo y el aprecio de sus compañeros, la jerarquía empresarial es mucho más horizontal porque todos hemos salido de ahí, y Dios mediante todos podemos llegar ahí. En cambio en nuestra cultura Latina, nuestra cultura es la revés, la cultura es vertical. El poder y la autoridad, te lo da tu investidura, te lo da el cargo que tienes, te lo da el puesto que tienes, o a quien conozcas y no necesariamente los logros que haces, que has obtenido o que has alcanzado. Y nosotros tratamos de demostrar que tenemos autoridad al mostrar nuestro título, en cambio los Americanos no. Los Americanos sabes quienes son, saben donde están parados, saben la autoridad que tienen y como digo tienen las reglas del juego bien marcadas. Reconoce la autoridad por el trabajo que se hace y reconoce que el que ha llegado a esa posición es porque realmente está ahí y porque se lo merece. La cosa es nosotros no tenemos mucho personal expatriado en nuestra organización, entonces no vemos muy profundamente o muy de frente esta situación y por lo general cuando viene gente del exterior Americanos o Europes como te comentaba, ya el hecho de que sean extranjeros es como: uy sí es el jefe mayor entonces es un poco, como que se le rinde reverencia y obviamente esto les afecta también a ellos porque dicen: bueno nosotros hemos venido a hacer un trabajo mas como ustedes, somos uno mas, no necesitan hacer todo esto. Pero como te digo no hemos tenido mucha relación con expatriados que estén a cargo de cosas en la oficina.

Q: ¿Pero por lo menos con los que están en la oficina que dicen ellos de esas formalidades y atenciones que ustedes tienen con ellos?

A: La aptitud de ellos es así, no les gusta esas cosas, de hecho nuestro director nacional es de origen Europeo, entonces cuando el te habla como conversación de pasillo no mantiene esa distancia que mantenía el anterior director. Pero cuando se trata de cosas de trabajo el va directo a la solución, entonces ese es el problema esta es la solución y listo, suficiente, siguiente. Entonces como que las distancias de poder hablar con el han bajado, de razón que son más cercanas, pero en cuestiones de trabajo el es el jefe y el tiene la ultima palabra porque esa es la posición que el está representando y toda la organización lo respaldan entonces eso te queda claro. Pero el si invoca a la participación, el es muy participativo.

**Question 6: Do U.S. American managers have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture?**

A: Si de hecho las Americanos son mas orientados a los cambios y a la innovación. De hecho como te comentaba, cuando llegó nuestro nuevo director lo primero que hizo fue reformular toda la estrategia y toda la forma de trabajo que teníamos. Entonces revolvió todo de pies a cabeza y todos estábamos aquí como que uy y ahora que va a pasar. En una nueva estrategia y con una nueva reestructuración se piensa que nos van a despedir a todos. Pero bueno eso no es así, lo que el quiere ver es algo que sea funcional y ver los recursos que tiene y con los que cuenta y ver si está bien ubicados o si están desubicados o podrían estar relocalizados en lugares que sean mas productivos, osea lo que a el le interesa es la productividad, no tanto la camaradería, o las
estructuras anteriores o como se comportaba la gente antes. A nosotros como Latinos, nos asusta eso, nos da inseguridad porque nosotros contamos con otro tipo de características nuestras, de nuestra cosmovisión que sí son importantes pero no necesarias, pero para ellos no. Pero entonces su pensamiento es mucho más operativo, más productivo.

**Question 7: Do U.S. American managers have an individualistic culture?**

**A:** Sí definitivamente la cultura es más individualista sobre todo en las grandes ciudades donde la pesa corre y tu tienes que pelear por tu éxito y todo. En cambio en América Latina nosotros nos asociamos, por ejemplo el hecho de asociarnos, el hecho de estar con un grupo de gente aunque no hagamos nada, no hagamos nada productivo, pero ya el hecho de estar con gente es algo que llena nuestras expectativas. Los Americanos no, los Americanos están con gente cuando tienen que estar con gente, no por socializar, pero sí es por conveniencia o por beneficio para ellos entonces sí lo van a hacer, sí se van a reunir y sí van a estar, pero sí no tratan de evitarlo o directamente no lo hacen. Y esto generalmente se percibe, osea a las personas extranjeras como antisociales. Digamos nosotros terminamos el trabajo después de un día muy duro y en la noche siempre nos reunimos a conversar o a charlar o a socializar un poco. En cambio ellos terminan un día de trabajo duro y ya me tengo que ir a descansar porque mañana hay que levantarse temprano y bueno nos deja pensando ¿qué hemos hecho mal? ¿qué ha pasado? ¿en como le hemos ofendido? Y obviamente eso les impide tener una mejor apreciación de la realidad, de la vida de las personas, y les impide tener un mejor acercamiento a la comunidad en sí misma. Entonces los resultados que tengan, los analices, la intervención o la observación que tengan no van a ser los mas reales ni los mas precisos porque hay una especie de subnivel de información que la consigues solamente socializando con la gente formalmente.

**Questions 8: Do U.S. American managers have a vertical individualistic culture?**

**A:** Si es lo que te comentaba, cuando los Americanos saben que alguien ha llegado a ese puesto es porque saben que se lo ha ganado, entonces merece los privilegios que tiene ese puesto. Ahora precisamente porque saben que se lo ha ganado, también saben de que se lo pueden perder entonces también evitan de cometer mas errores. En cambio los Latinoamericanos no, los Latinoamericanos generalmente piensan en el puesto, como algo codiciable, algo que cuando yo llegue a la cima voy a poder hacer lo que yo quiera hacer y no es así. Osea cuando llegas al liderazgo en realidad tienes menos oportunidad de hacer lo que quieras hacer y te debes mas a las funciones y los organigramas de la forma de trabajo que tienes. Esto crea un conflicto a veces porque cuando los Latinoamericanos llegamos al “poder” no sabemos que hacer con el. El proceso de concientización y de ganarse ese espacio de liderazgo. En cambio los Americanos no, los Americanos como te digo han empezando de cero y saben que llegando ahí, primero no se acaba la carrera sino que hay mucho mas que aspirar delante y segundo saben que precisamente porque les ha costado llegar ahí es que tienen que cuidar las decisiones que toman y las cosas que hacen. Y esto no se ve en los Bolivianos.

**Question 9: What is the leadership style of U.S. American managers?**

**A:** Mira eso me parece muy interesante porque he estado leyendo muchos libros sobre el liderazgo y el desarrollo y me parece que tanto los Latinoamericanos como los Americanos en un principio en el siglo XVIII hemos partido del mismo punto de jefes autoritarios, líderes, que
tenían que controlar absolutamente todo y que sabían que si no estaban presentes en todo, que si no eran omnipotentes entonces las cosas no funcionaban. Pero el desarrollo de las economías y el dinamismo comercial y empresarial ha sido muy diferente en ambos países, osea a medida de que las empresas crecían en Estados Unidos, los líderes se dieron cuenta que no podían manejar todo, tantas divisiones y subdivisiones tanto personal que manejar que obviamente era imposible que el jefe esté en todo y los jefes que tenían un nivel vertical pues fueron fracasando entonces los líderes se han dado cuenta que esa no es la forma de organizar ni de liderizar sino mas bien era un perjuicio. Tenían que delegar funciones porque ellos no podían hacerlo todo, obviamente con límites, con parámetros, con cierto grado de responsabilidad de demás. En cambio en América Latina pasó lo contrario cuando las empresas empezaron a tener problemas precisamente por ese tipo de liderazgo entraron los gobiernos militares y las empresas se radicalizaron mucho más. Entonces los líderes eran mucho más verticales, se nacionalizaron todas las empresas, todas las organizaciones y además el estado lo controlaba todo. Entonces la gente al saber que el estado lo controlaba todo pues no se preocuparon por desarrollar un tipo de liderazgo, un tipo de relación de medio ambiente empresarial que fuera productiva. Productiva en el aspecto humano, no tanto en el aspecto comercial, y bueno los errores que estamos teniendo ahora como países Latinoamericanos son precisamente eso. Todavía estamos en la transición de pasar de un liderazgo vertical a un liderazgo más horizontal y compartido.

Q: Y ¿cómo usted cree que este aspecto influye en sí a la preparación y desarrollo de proyectos en Bolivia?
A: Esencialmente es de la misma forma. Por ejemplo, cuando yo necesito información de algún proyecto en vez de que me la pasen directamente para agilizar procesos, me la tienen que pasar a través del líder, o el líder tiene que dar la autorización para que pase a otro líder que tiene la otra autorización para recién todos estar conformes y todos están de acuerdos y ya cuando me llega la información ya es demasiado tarde. Ya ha pasado la fecha límite, ya uno no lo necesita. Claro y este proceso lo que consigue es la burocracia. Eso es lo que logra una burocracia y se complican los procesos.

Q: En ese caso, ¿cómo reaccionan sus contrapartes estadounidenses, sus jefes Americanos por ejemplo, a toda esa jerarquía?
A: En algunos casos, el jefe ha sido, o por lo menos con los años de experiencia que yo he tenido, los jefes han sido radicales y apoyaban esta estructura que adelgazaban acostumbrar siempre. Hay nuevos procesos en lo que esto se entiende de otra forma, osea tu estás en tal área, sabes lo que debes hacer, eres responsable de ello, hazlo. Si te equivocas pues son tus responsabilidades, y si no te equivocas pues lo hiciste bien y felicitaciones. Pero tu sabes lo que tienes que hacer, empezar a construir confianza y a autoestima y capacidad de liderazgo en las personas que están debajo tuyo porque el jefe en la cima máxima se sostiene a través del trabajo que hace el resto de su equipo. Y si el resto del equipo hace un trabajo bien y eficiente el jefe se sostiene bien y es eficiente. Eso se está entendiendo cada vez más aunque en el área rural es mucho más difícil todavía porque los procesos son muchos mas lentos y la transferencia de tecnología y de capacidad es mucho mas retardada, pero poco a poco se está llegando a eso también, los procesos están siendo más exigentes y los jefes se están dando cuenta que no pueden controlar todo que no pueden estar todo el tiempo en todos lados y se están agilizando los procesos.
Question 10: Do U.S. American managers have a short-time orientation?

A: Creo que habría que hacer un análisis un poquito más amplio mas global de eso, no tanto como el pasado ni el presente sino el futuro. Osea el futuro occidental, osea mira va hacia el futuro mirándolo de frente y dejando un poco el pasado atrás. En cambio la cultural oriental, tenemos la sudamericana, la Hindú, ¿que se yo? del hemisferio sur en general, termina hacia el futuro de espaldas hacia el futuro mirando hacia atrás, para ellos o para nosotros diría es mucho más importante el pasado que el futuro y eso obviamente nos afecta en como coincidimos el tiempo, osea el respeto a los ancianos, el respeto a las tradiciones, osea el respeto a todas esas cosas es mucho más importantes que el desarrollo, el progreso, y el crecimiento a futuro para nosotros, porque miramos el futuro de espaldas y eso nos causa en algunos casos ventajas porque tenemos mas concientes de lo que es el cuidado a la tierra, tenemos mas concientes lo que es el respeto a los ancianos, tenemos mas arraigado el sentimiento de familia, de pertenencia, de unidad, a diferencia de los Americanos en este caso. En los proyectos que nosotros hacemos generalmente tenemos que tener las dos cosas en cuenta osea la preservación de la información, de la tradición, de las costumbres y de las culturas puras anunciadas, antiguas, que tienen mucho de bien, no por nada han vivido tanto tiempo digamos, pero obviamente también hay que contextualizarlas digamos a la forma en que funcionan en el mundo moderno. Entonces por ejemplo si se quiere hacer una propuesta de salud, hay que tener en cuenta las condiciones duras en la que está la población, como han ido ellos enfrentando sus enfermedades y sus problemas de salud hace muchos años atrás y para ellos eso es más aceptable y como lograr que esos procesos se identifiquen y se modernicen y puedan ser mucho más efectivos, mucho más viables y que impacten a la mayor cantidad de gente. Eso son algunos criterios que se deben tomar en cuenta para desarrollo de propuestas.

Question 11: Do U.S. American managers have a monochronic time orientation?

A: Yo creo que es de nuevo por la forma en que vivimos y por las distancias. Para moverte de un lado al otro en los Estados Unidos, tardas dos horas. Entonces tardar dos horas de ida y dos horas de vuelta para tu trabajo por ejemplo mas la media hora o la una que tardas en otra cosa es una perdida de tiempo por eso es que necesitan ganar o reaccionar o recuperar ese tiempo de la forma mas rápida posible y para eso y por eso el tiempo para ellos es un commodity no es un beneficio que tienes que ganártelo y tienes que administrarlo. En cambio para nosotros las distancias son mas cortas, las relaciones son mas cercanas entonces no perdemos tanto tiempo en eso. Por eso también es que nos descuidamos un poco de este aspecto. Ahora obviamente eso nos causa problemas porque pensamos siempre: bueno para que lo voy a hacer hoy si lo puedo hacer mañana. En cambio los Americanos saben que mañana probablemente no tengan entonces mañana se les llena de otras cosas mucho mas. Entonces prefieren hacerlo todo hoy y hacerlo todo rápido y si tienen que sacrificarse y matonearse con el tiempo pues lo van a hacer.

Q: Y ¿cómo esto es percibido por sus otros compañeros de la oficina nacional?

A: Eso si es una buena pregunta. Bueno yo digo que al trabajar con una ONG internacional que tiene standards internacionales y que en el otro lado del mundo tu sabes que lo que tu hagas ahorita depende del resultado la satisfacción o disatisfacción de muchas personas, nos ha obligado un poco a entrar en ese ritmo. Entonces nosotros…o por lo menos yo ahora tengo muy conciente este problema del tiempo. No me estreso tanto con ello pero si sé que los deadlines son los deadlines, de que lo que haga hoy le va a afectar a la gente mañana y puedo percibir que si no respondo un email hoy dia a x personas, a los dos minutos me ha mandado 5.000 mas para
decirme que ha pasado. Entonces como que nos han obligado un poco a entrar a ese ritmo de vida también. Está cambiando nuestra forma de trabajo y nuestra percepción de la realidad, y nuestro compromiso con el trabajo que no era menos pero era diferente tal vez con la relación del tiempo.

**Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?**

**A:** Generalmente los primeros contactos son por correo electrónico, yo lo hago todo en Inglés, no tengo problema con eso. Algunas personas que hablan Español tratan de practicar su Español escrito o hablado todo el tiempo y les doy la oportunidad. Pero generalmente cuando son cosas muy rápidas, muy concretas, de organización ya de trabajo, lo hacemos en Inglés, lo hacemos más directos. Cuando ya son detalles a ultimar, muy delicadas o que se yo, ya tenemos conversaciones electrónicas o usamos Skype. Ahora el Skype está bien utilizado ampliamente por la confraternidad de nuestra organización. Eso para ahorrar costos, acortar distancias y para tener un contacto fluido todo el tiempo salvo emergencias usamos el teléfono pero casi todo el tiempo estamos utilizando Skype.

**Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?**

**A:** No es complicado para mí. Te digo yo no tengo problema con el Inglés y sé donde contactar a la gente. Tengo los horarios. Generalmente me dan uno dos o tres teléfonos sabiendo que las conexiones no son tan buenas. No tengo mucho problema de contacto salvo cuando salgo a campo. Ahí es más problemáticos por las conexiones de Internet los servicios de teléfonos no son confiables. Entonces es una cuestión más de tecnología que de socialización o conocimiento o contacto personal.

**Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the U.S. American managers?**

**A:** Bueno para mí no hay mucho problema como te digo y creo que no es tanto el lenguaje sino el contexto en el que se usan las palabras. Una palabra en Español traducida literalmente al Inglés no significa lo mismo y viceversa. Entonces tienes que no solamente dar la traducción de la palabra sino el contexto que representa esa palabra, y a veces cuando estamos haciendo proyectos, propuestas, el contextualizarlas de Español al Inglés o del Inglés al Español nos causa ciertos conflictos. En unos casos nosotros entendemos algo de una propuesta y lo escribimos en ese nivel, pero digamos en Estados Unidos lo han entendido de forma diferente, entonces muchas veces tenemos que aclarar, muchas veces tenemos que reescribir partes de las propuestas o simplemente adecuárselas a un lenguaje más entendible por los donantes por los americanos que realmente no significan lo mismo para nosotros.

**Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?**

**A:** Creo que estas diferencias culturales impactan en el sentido que tenemos que ser mucho más cuidadosos en lo que hacemos para poder entender esas diferencias y poder presentar las propuestas de forma más asequible a los donantes, entonces nos redunda en mucho más tiempo de revisión de los conceptos, en el entenderlos más claramente en poder comunicarlos a la gente que nos va a ayudar a hacer las propuestas de forma más claramente, necesitamos mucho más
tiempo al principio de la propuesta para explicar de que se trata, cuales son los resultados, cuales son los objetivos del donante, la edificación primero, el proceso digamos es de clarificar bien al 100% con la oficina de Estados Unidos, con la gente que nos ha mandado la propuesta y que van a estar a cargo, ya después que estemos claros con ellos, entonces tenemos que hacer el mismo proceso aquí con las otras personas que van a trabajar en la propuesta y eso tiene que ver mucho con el liderazgo, con la cosmovisión de la que hablábamos, con todos estos aspectos que hacen a la cultura y que se ven pues plasmadas en la forma incluso en que escribimos las propuestas.

Interview 4: April 24th, 2008

Question 1: What traits do U.S. American managers share?

A: En partes es verdad, pero en otras partes creo que no es verdad. En la parte de la puntualidad, de que planifican con anticipación, se dedican a sus planes y todo eso es verdad, pero de que son introvertidos, digamos, y las otras características digamos innatas de la persona son digamos parcialmente verdad en algunas personas. No podemos generalizar esas otras actitudes o condiciones que se manifiestan.

Q: Y de las características que usted dice que sí son verdad, ¿cómo usted cree que ellas impactan al desarrollo y ejecución de proyectos en Bolivia?

A: Es un desarrollo o es un trabajo más organizado, ya se sabe en realidad lo que viene por delante y en el trabajo que yo he estado involucrado, no han tanta rigidez digamos, es más acomodarse a la situación política y económica del país.

Q: Entonces usted se refiere, a que ¿los horarios no son tan rígidos sino más flexibles?

A: Sí, eso obliga a ser sensible, la situación obliga a ser flexible, y se acomoda en eso, hasta cierto punto. No estamos hablando, osea no podemos generalizar, digamos hay personas con las que he trabajado, Norteamericanos con los que he trabajado, y sí tienen esas características pero otros no.

Question 2: Do U.S. American managers have a low-context culture?

A: Generalizando sí es verdad. Esto afecta dependiendo del nivel de la comunicación a quien se le está dando, digamos si la comunicación se le está dando a un técnico a un subalterno, o se está dando directamente a un beneficiario en la comunidad. Si es a nivel beneficiario, a nivel campesino en la comunidad, digamos, pues es un problema porque la comunicación directa no está de acuerdo a la cultura de los campesinos. Tiene que haber una introducción, tiene que haber, hablar de otras cosas antes de llegar al meollo o al problema central. Entonces depende del escenario en donde está dándose la comunicación del escenario del momento, si es a nivel técnico o a nivel de beneficiario, a nivel campesino. A nivel de la oficina está bien directo. Tiene que ser algo directo, es mucho mas efectivo. Pero a nivel, cuando va el extranjero o el norteamericano va al campo, no tiene que ser tan directo, entonces la idiosincrasia es otro choque que se tiene allá.

Q: Y ese estilo de comunicación directa, ¿es bien recibido bien ahí, en la oficina nacional?

A: Es bien recibido. Estoy hablando de toda mi experiencia, no solo estoy hablando de esta oficina. En general, sí es bien recibida. Lo directo es más recibido.
Question 3: What is the communication pattern of U.S. American managers?

A: Sí, en general es verdad, con excepción de algunos como estamos hablando. Sí, pero depende de las personas. Hay algunos que tienen incapacidad para conectarse con otras culturas y hay otros que lo hacen perfectamente en base a la observación, en base a como deben proceder, es muy importante el don que tiene la persona para hacer este tipo de comunicación. Pero estas características no afectan los proyectos en forma significativa.

Question 4: What is the meeting style of U.S. American managers?

A: Sí, es verdad, es verdad.
Q: Entonces usted cree que ese estilo deja espacio para la discusión ¿o no?
A: Sí, porque en realidad la discusión viene punto por punto, osea hay una introducción para saber que es lo que se va a tratar, la orden del día digamos, y hay una discusión franca de todos los puntos. Hay algunos aspectos sí que quedan importantes, que quedan en decisión de sus manos osea no todo es compartido, hay algunas decisiones que las toman directamente ellos que son bastante fundamentales.

Question 5: Do U.S. American managers have a low-power distance culture?

A: Sí es verdad eso es todo lo que he podido en toda mi experiencia, se esfuerzan en mantener y tratar a todas las personas con igualdad con equidad. Aunque no siempre ocurre pues en otras personas.
Q: ¿Y cómo eso es recibido a nivel local?
A: Es prácticamente uno de los puntos más fuertes que tienen los norteamericanos para tener eficiencia en el trabajo en todos, desde los chóferes, hasta los conductores, hasta los ingenieros, los directores y todos son tratados de la misma forma. Es el punto fuerte de la cultura norteamericana. Eso no quiere decir que siempre ocurre pero se esfuerzan.

Question 6: Do U.S. American managers have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: Sí es verdad. Claro que sí es verdad. En realidad hay una incertidumbre en cuanto a la dependencia jerárquica entonces esto puede causar algunos problemas en la ejecución de los proyectos al saber que hay que dar gusto a la otra persona, al supervisor para tener resultados. Sin poder tener mucha libertad para decir algunos puntos con los que uno no está de acuerdo.
Q: En ese caso ¿diría usted que los norteamericanos se amoldan más para lograr que los proyectos o propuestas sean exitosos?
A: Así es.

Question 7: Do U.S. American managers have an individualistic culture?

A: No he tenido esa sensación en todo mi trabajo. No he tenido o no he sufrido esa sensación, especialmente yo. Pero si tuviera que generalizar, diría que sí. En el sentido de que ya se tiene un objetivo propuesto, como institución, como organización ya se tiene algo fijo entonces hay algo también de manipulación para ir hacia ese objetivo. Que en cierta forma no es beneficiaría para todo el grupo sino para ciertas personas.
Questions 8: Do U.S. American managers have a vertical individualistic culture?

A: En lo que se refiere a los logros es cierto. No en tanto de cómo se miden los logros sino en el aspecto de desarrollo mismo. En la misma toma de decisiones a lo largo del proyecto. Como es un proyecto que se lo ejecuta, entonces puede haber muchos golpes de timón al medio de ejecutar, mucho cambios, muchas alternativas, entonces hay si algunos aspectos que el personal local no tiene mucho que ver.

Question 9: What is the leadership style of U.S. American managers?

A: Sí es verdad en algunas instituciones es verdad. En algunos proyectos es verdad y en otros no.
Q: ¿Pero usted ve algunas similitudes en las personas que sí son así y que no son así? Por ejemplo el nivel de educación?
A: No es tanto la educación sino su forma de ser de las personas. La forma de ser, la visión que tienen del desarrollo, la visión que tienen de su función, no podía generalizar en ese aspecto.

Question 10: Do U.S. American managers have a short-time orientation?

A: No es tan cierto que los Norteamericanos toman decisiones rápidas. He estado trabajando con varios proyectos que mas bien las decisiones son tardías y lo que necesita el Hispano es el ser más decisivo. Rápido mas bien para tomarse su tiempo, para pensar y ejecutar en si las decisiones, osea hay algo que sí perjudica la ejecución de los proyectos no se si me entiende. Las decisiones que se toman, no son rápidas, son tardías. En general son tardías, entonces a los Hispanos, a los Bolivianos ya nos queda mucho tiempo para pensar en las acciones porque ellos necesitan, necesitamos pensar un poco mas y se tiene ya la ejecución de los proyectos entonces se hace un poco a la rápida.
Q: ¿Entonces como usted cree que esto afecta a los proyectos si esto se toma así como a la ligera o a lo rápido?
A: Sí, si claro que afecta a la calidad de los proyectos y esto ocurre como en un 50%.
Q: ¿Eso es bastante! Entonces la mayoría de veces les toca así a lo rápido.
A: Sí sí a lo rápido porque las decisiones no son rápidas. Las decisiones, las instructivas no son rápidas, las directrices no son rápidas entonces ya no queda mucho tiempo para ejecutar.
Q: Y en este sentido, ¿usted cree que hay cierta frustración de parte de las oficinas nacionales porque no se están haciendo las cosas como se desearía? O ¿se acepta, bueno es parte del trabajo y no hay nada que hacer?
A: Sí hay frustraciones en varios aspectos porque no salen bien las cosas. Osea las cosas salen bien pero podrían ser mejores.
Q: ¿Qué usted recomendaría para mejorar este aspecto?
A: Tomar decisiones más rápidas y tener más tiempo para pensarlas a las acciones. Esto yo también creo que se debe a la misma inestabilidad del país.

Question 11: Do U.S. American managers have a monochronic time orientation?

A: Es verdad a medias. Ahí hay algunas cosas a la que nosotros le damos importancia, algunos proyectos, algunas decisiones, algunos logros que le damos importancia y tenemos la diferencia de los norteamericanos, quienes le dan importancia a otros aspectos como la publicidad, la
visibilidad, como el resultado de algunas reuniones que para nosotros son intrascendentes en fin. Entonces en eso hay problemas en realidad, que uno se dedica a la parte que cree que es lo importante y que al final no haya sido muy importante sino que era una cosa aquí para nosotros no es…

Q: ¿Y usted cómo crece que la oficina de los Estados Unidos valora los esfuerzos que la oficina nacional en Bolivia hace?
A: Sí. No siempre se valora en su verdadera dimensión. Aunque las prioridades son las mismas, digamos hay prioridades añadidas para ellos. Las prioridades en líneas generales son las mismas pero hay algunas acciones puntuales que son mas importantes, añadidas que son de mayor impacto para ellos como algunas reuniones de demostración de resultados, algunas inauguraciones, la visibilidad del programa hacia fuera, y sin preocuparse de la visibilidad hacia dentro.

Q: Siguiendo este tema del tiempo, ¿cómo usted cree que esto afecta lo que son las fechas límites de propuestas o de ciertas partes de ejecución del proyecto en sí?
A: Bueno en los proyectos en donde estoy trabajando pues son de desarrollo alternativo en realidad se presentan un montón de imponderables que no es posible cumplir con los tiempos precisos porque hay problemas en campo, hay problemas a nivel de gobierno, entonces es ya acostumbrado tener un margen de error en todo estos tiempos

Q: ¿Entonces en ese sentido usted cree que las fechas límites son realistas? Osea que los estadounidenses si ya llevan bastante tiempo trabajando en Bolivia pues deben saber estas cosas y deben tener cierta comprensión…
A: Tienen holgura porque si llegan a conocer exactamente como se trabaja acá pues tiene que haber holgura sin escandalizar mucho. Las fechas que los norteamericanos nos dan son realistas pero también tienen su flexibilidad depende de la situación de cómo va. Nosotros siempre hemos actuado en función del gobierno, de las fechas que he trabajado hemos actuado en función del gobierno. Entonces no es asumirla nosotros sino del gobierno.

Q: Entonces no es cuestión interna de la organización sino mas bien que esto depende de los que están dando el dinero, de los que dan los fondos para los proyectos, ¿de parte de ellos las fechas límites pueden ser problemáticas?
A: No pero… sí deberían ser problemas pero no son porque realmente los incumplimientos entre comillas hablando tiene su justificativo. En el tipo de trabajo de desarrollo. En otros no debería haber.

**Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?**

A: Inmediatamente a través del jefe de equipo, yo no tengo contacto directo con la oficina internacional.

**Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?**

A: No aplicable.

**Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the U.S. American managers?**

A: No, porque todas las contrapartes norteamericanas hablan Español.
Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?

A: En realidad afecta. Existen las diferencias culturales pero mucho depende de la persona. Existen las diferencias culturales igual que existen diferencias en género, en sexo, en color y en todo eso. Entonces existen las diferencias culturales, pero mucho depende de la habilidad y capacidad de conectarse con una persona de otra cultura.

Q: Y en ese caso, ¿usted diría que la mayoría o la minoría logra conectarse con la cultura o no?
A: La mayoría con la que he trabajado, tiene capacidad para conectarse. Yo diría que un 70% de las contrapartes pueden hacer esa conexión.

Q: ¿Algo más que quiera añadir?
A: En la parte de comportamiento, en la parte de ser como persona, tu sabes que los Bolivianos también somos muy corteses, demasiado corteses tal vez. En cambio los norteamericanos son mas o menos corteses. Solamente son corteses cuando quieren obtener algo mas o menos.

Q: ¿Y eso se percibe como falta de respeto por la cultura Boliviana?
A: Sí algunos niveles sí. Especialmente a nivel del campo y del beneficiario sí. Cuando se les invita algo, alguna comida en el campo, a veces no acepta esto por medio lógico por el tipo de comida, por el tipo de preparación y todo eso. Entonces eso trae algunos problemas a nivel, bueno estoy hablando a nivel del beneficiario. Lo que hay que hacer para adecuarse a la cultura es observar y ver como un Boliviano trata a otro Boliviano y tratar de evitar eso. Y es difícil decirle hay que aceptarlo, y a veces se le dice tienen que aceptarlo sino se van a enojar. Iguamente la parte de los saludos, cuando entra alguien, hay que ponernos de pie o si estamos en la mesa y con mayor razón sí es mujer, pero es la costumbre de ellos de quedarse sentados. Te estoy hablando a nivel de campo, a nivel de beneficiarios. Entonces esa aptitud, igual los del campo como te decía anteriormente, antes de hablar de un tema es importante darle su tiempo a los saludos preliminares digamos, ¿cómo estás?, ¿cómo te va?, no entrar directamente al asunto, como ocurre en una reunión técnica. En ese caso debería variar su comportamiento.

Q: Entonces en ese caso ustedes los que trabajan en el campo son como los intermediarios, entonces ¿qué tipo de acciones toman cuando esto pasa?
A: Directamente decirle a la otra persona, no a la comunidad, sino al norteamericano lo que se debe hacer, pero ya la imagen, la impresión queda. Entonces en ese caso, yo digo que a todos los americanos que vienen a trabajar en Latinoamérica deberían ser seleccionados no solo por su conocimiento técnicos, y su preparación sino también en base a su calidad de sus relaciones interpersonales. Hay que tener buena observación para adaptarse a otra cultura y tiene que tener especialmente el sentido común. El sentido común se dice que es el menos común de los sentidos. También se puede aprender observando como las culturas de las mismas personas se tratan entre sí. Hacen preguntas quizá y aquí se ve que tenemos costumbre de cuando uno pregunta sobre la cultura de un grupo de una sociedad se la despacha muy favorablemente porque son preguntas de su propia cultura de la forma de entrar. Pero al fin y al cabo estamos todos trabajando por una misma causa, así hayan diferentes visiones de ver las cosas, diferentes prioridades, si pero hacemos todo el esfuerzo y toda la voluntad necesaria para trabajar en forma harmónica y sacarle el mayor provecho posible a esas diferencias de culturas que realmente es enriquecedora para nosotros y para todos.
Interview 5: April 30th, 2008

Question 1: What traits do U.S. American managers share?

A: Sí osea yo creo que son las características generales. Osea de las contrapartes estadounidenses. Yo prácticamente diría en cada uno de los ítems que hay están, sin embargo cuando digo de manera general. Hay algunas excepciones, o tal vez también podría decir que cuando ya están acá en el medio, algunos de esos aspectos pueden cambiar. Por ejemplo, cuando dices que son planificadores, si yo siento que el estadounidense es planificador, pero cuando llega también a terreno, osea por dos aspectos, uno porque no siempre lo que planifica se cumple en terreno, entonces eso te hace cambiar, definitivamente te hace modificar algunas cosas muy rígidas a que tal vez ellos traen. Numero dos que también la cultura de acá obliga a ese estadounidense a cambiar. Osea te puedo hablar de los horarios por ejemplo. Osea que tu dices a las 8:30, como Latino, como Boliviano, y de pronto parecería que es normal que empiece a las 9:00 o 9:15, entonces si bien el estadounidense trata por todos los medios de que eso sea así, muchas veces tiene que adaptarse a lo que es la vida real digamos, aunque hay personas estadounidenses mas rígidas, y también dependiendo de la jerarquía que tenga. Si es un director, obviamente seguro es la norma para la institución tanto para lo administrativo como para lo operativo, vas a ser estar en hora. Bueno eso no tiene vuelta que dar digamos, pero hay otros estadounidenses que tal vez se dejen llevar por el medio, tal vez no son los muchos, pero que ya van cediendo un poco a esta formalidad que hay, en lo que es esta planificación. Pero ya te digo, yo estaría de acuerdo con todos los puntos que has dictado pero con esas variantes ya cuando se llega a terreno.

Q: Y usted por lo menos, ¿cómo creo que eso afecta tanto al desarrollo de las propuestas como la ejecución de proyectos?

A: Bueno yo creo que es de una forma de ambos lados bueno con función de las cosas. Osea definitivamente planificar y tener horarios para responder a la comunidad, para las reuniones que tiene acá dentro de las oficinas, dentro de la planificación administrativa, es bueno, osea es saludable. Definitivamente eso ordena y hace mas eficiente el trabajo. Sin embargo te digo, está también otra dosis que te digo es mas cultural. Es parte de la cultura. Osea tampoco tu puedes llegar como estadounidense renegando a una reunión o esperar a todos furioso porque se atrasaron media hora, y menos mas bajas a las comunidades y mas es esta costumbre. Te estoy diciendo, osea en la oficina puede ser que tu puedas ordenar y decir por lo menos a todos los empleados, como has ocurrido en la oficina ¿no?, osea ningún técnico se puede atrasar y creo que es una norma dentro de la oficina, pero ya llegas a las comunidades y si el estadounidense no es tolerante con eso que es una práctica cultural entonces tal vez osea como que se nota en tanto la indisposición. Osea alguna vez ha ocurrido, por ejemplo, la inauguración de tal cosa, y por lo menos llega el financiador estadounidense y es punto obviamente y se siente enojado porque bueno las autoridades empiezan a llegar a las 10:30, a las 11:00 -11:15, y además ya te digo operativo, y además de eso está el aspecto de que bueno si es mas un trabajo comunitario bien con la participación de autoridades y seres comunales y municipales, cada uno se tendría que dar su tiempo, su espacio y bueno puede interferir en esa parte de relacionamiento. Porque no es siempre a la disposición de la comunidad de entender al gringuito que ha llegado, y dicen: hay y ellos si son puntuales debemos entender, no y mas a veces con la situación política que hay en el país de que…
Question 2: Do U.S. American managers have a low-context culture?

A: Ahí yo creo que los estadounidenses son unas personas que hablan directamente, dice lo que siente, pide lo que quiere y no está con vueltas. Estoy de acuerdo plenamente con eso. Osea yo creo que si es una cierta barrera, no te diré es una total barrera porque ambos tenemos que ser tolerantes obviamente. Osea nosotros a aprender a ser directos, porque somos muy volteros, y es mas le damos una connotación a las cosas, de que si hemos podido decir eso pero al final no era eso lo que queríamos decirles digamos. Entonces, bueno ya te digo si no hay conocimiento de la cultura del otro y de la cultura del otro pues entonces sí podría ser una barrera. He visto situaciones en la que se yo, por decirte nos llama alguien para que hagamos una descripción del proyecto, y yo veo que el estadounidense es más directo, osea sin dar vueltas, te dice el objetivo del asunto, las cinco cosas digamos que son los resultados que se esperan y las estrategias más grandes. Pero nosotros sí le damos un montón de vueltas, osea somos anecdóticos y ponemos una gran dosis de otras cosas y hasta algunas veces podríamos salirnos del tema. Entonces ya te digo si no entendemos la cultura del otro, entonces podría ser una barrera importante.

Q: ¿Entonces usted cree que la mayoría de gente ya está preparada para esto o no?
A: Bueno yo creo que eso depende de cuanto tiempo haz convivido con ellos, compartido con ellos en termino de oficina, te digo, entre mas tiempo trabajas con el estadounidense entonces mas llegas a entender esto. Pero digamos si es la primera vez que lo haces, puede ser que si te afecte esta falta de conocimiento y esas interferencias que podría aburrir al otro y al otro, porque es mas, es el gringuito que ha dicho las cinco cosas y no ha contado lo riquísimo que son las mujeres de Calamarca y lo que dicen y no se que otra cosa, y el otro también el estadounidense puede decir esa técnica le da vueltas y vueltas y mira una cosa que ha podido decir en 10 minutos, nos ha tomado 3-4 horas. Yo creo que

Q: ¿Usted entonces cree que hay frustración de las dos partes en ese sentido?
A: Sí yo creo que si no entiendes y no estás preparado o no haz compartido mas de un tiempo, pues yo no sé decir exactamente cuanto tiempo, yo creo que si pueden haber frustraciones.

Q: Entonces si se ve frecuentemente esto en el trabajo diario, osea durante la preparación de los proyectos como la ejecución de los proyectos.
A: Claro pudiera decir que sí. Hay técnicos, osea si hay un equipo que ya conoce digamos la idiosincrasia, la cultura del gringo y ese gringo también la cultura, osea el lugar donde llega, entonces va a entender, va a ser mas llevadero. Pero si de pronto te pones a trabajar con un gringo o con un Boliviano, y ahí sí pueden haber interferencias. Ya te digo depende del grado de conocimiento de la cultura del otro.

Question 3: What is the communication pattern of U.S. American managers?

A: Volviendo a lo que habíamos dicho en la anterior pregunta, sí creo que son directos, sí creo que son concisos y sí precisos. Ahora esa la connotación de abiertos y veraz pues si yo pienso que sí también es cierto pero….a ver….La ultima era que no ponen el corazón en los negocios, ¿verdad? Empezaré por esta partecita. Yo si creo que como son, por lo menos las personas que conozco, osea la gran mayoría, osea son muy técnicos y de pronto dejan de un lado la parte, cuando ya hablamos de corazón, la parte humana. Entonces ahí como que, y eso es como que para nosotros, una cosa como diría yo frío y no llegas a conocer osea la parte de la cultura, esperamos mas allá osea el corazón de las personas. Por ejemplo, en Bolivia, esa cultura Aymara, esa cultura Quechua, entonces si va a tener una interferencia cuando tu friamente
quieres aplicar, que se yo, cualquier proyecto. Y otra cosa también ingresa aquí, ese es el contexto cultural pero aquí también entra el contexto económico y también el aspecto político, y también el aspecto social definitivamente. Entonces si eres muy técnico, no vas a saber porque esas madres que tenían que reunirse a tal cosa, han preferido bloquear los caminos y faltar a nuestra reunión donde tenían un x beneficio digamos. ¡Qué irresponsables! Pueden pensar los estadounidenses, pero cuando piensas de que esas mamás no es cierto, caramba casi no tienen nada que perder, osea porque no van a salir a bloquear no es cierto y bueno perderse la reunión a que convocan la institución o los Xs técnicos que vienen con un financiamiento de afuera. Entonces poner el corazón, pues yo diría desglosando de esa manera, osea poner el corazón significa conocer la cultura, saber del aspecto social, político y económico osea hay, nada más otro ejemplo: trabajar con los jóvenes. Por lo menos a nosotros se nos ocurre tener un proyecto en el tema de salud, y de pronto están felices los jóvenes pero de pronto un exquisito proyecto ya te digo así, y de pronto pueden necesitar trabajar y tan, se perdieron el segundo día, o el tercer día o finalmente después de ya dos meses no les interesa el proyecto porque bueno quieren trabajar. Entonces tal vez, eso sí, y tal vez es masivo realmente, osea de 30 que vas a capacitar, tal vez por la situación económica hasta política diría yo, tal vez más de la mitad de los que empezaron ya no quieren estar en el programa, entonces si tu no vas a entender como estadounidense eso, y más bien buscar con el Boliviano estrategias para responder a esas necesidad también o para también para solucionar eso y a trabajar solamente con la cuarta parte del equipo que te queda, voluntarios, etc., entonces vas a evaluar que ese proyecto es mal, no es cierto, porque estás haciendo o evaluando en frío, sin conocer todos esos aspectos osea que son importantes.

Q: Menciona un muy buen punto. ¿Será que podría explicarme más acerca de cómo este aspecto influye en la evaluación de los proyectos?

A: Exacto, como decía, no es cuestión de decir bueno este taller era para 30 y se espera que de aquí a dos años estén lo 30. No. Tal vez, osea las bajas, por así decirlo, de esos 30 que tu esperabas sean altísimas y tengas que trabajar con 5 o con 8, pero ahí está el apreciar la calidad y el esfuerzo de esos 8 que han tenido que entre comillas reemplazar a sus otros compañeros que se han ido, digamos. Entonces bueno eso son dos ejemplos que te pongo. Si bien existen metas que sí ambas partes, osea tanto Bolivianos como estadounidenses, tienen un acuerdo, osea que ambas partes tienen un acuerdo osea pero ahí hay todas estas cosas que pasan en el camino, en Latinoamérica, y en Bolivia concretamente yo creo que hay que poner esos esfuerzos, porque hay que estar alerta siempre permanentemente porque la dinámica es así de cambiante y principalmente en Bolivia entonces se planifica una x cosa y más te digo en esta época de Bolivia. Nada mas para darte un ejemplo grueso de esa pregunta, hubo un taller nacional el año pasado porque se ha suspendido en Noviembre, se ha suspendido en Diciembre, y se ha tenido que hacer en el mes de Enero, y obviamente eso repercute en la ejecución de gastos, osea un taller nacional al que tenía que ir 35 personas incluyen aviones, gastos de hoteles, etc., de pronto ya no está en su presupuesto no entonces, ya es bajo el gasto que tienen. Te estoy hablando de un aspecto pero seguramente hay otros aspectos de los que se puedan mencionar, pero nada mas como ejemplos de seguramente muchas discusiones tienen. En eso de vivir, en esa situación un tanto difícil o bastante difícil.

Question 4: What is the meeting style of U.S. American managers?

A: Bueno sí es verdad, osea, hay la tendencia a los esquemas, no ve? Hay esquemas, es mas yo he recibido capacitaciones de cómo hacer presentaciones, osea que uno tiene que agarrar y te
estoy hablando de equipos estadounidenses, osea que tu tienes que tener como un índice de lo que vas a presentar, por decirte los antecedentes, los objetivos, las estrategias mas importantes, como tu mas o menos lo has descrito, y bueno esto con un numero de cómo se llama, de tiempo preciso. Esta capacitación no la dieron al personal Boliviano, para responder a presentaciones de financiamientos estadounidenses. Entonces mira yo creo que tiene dos lados. Uno que hay que tomarlo osea como técnico es interesante osea como te decía antes, osea ordenarnos algunas veces y mas los latinos que tendemos a ser anecdóticos y o a poner mas dosis de emociones y de actividades en cada cosa que decimos, pero yo creo que no tiene ni un extremo ni del otro. Pero si la tendencia del estadounidense es a esquematizar, a poner estas agendas bien precisas, y parecería que hasta para ordenar a estos Latinos así como para que se ordenen un poquito. Entonces yo digo, no es malo porque yo incluso como Boliviana soy repetitiva, a veces podría ser anecdótica si es que tengo los espacios y a veces somos revoltosos, podemos terminar en otros temas, no hay una agenda del día rígida, porque incluso en agendas, ¿no es cierto?, te digo entre Bolivianos con agendas, tendemos a ser revoltosos, anecdóticos, chistosos, y etc., etc., etc., entonces una reunión que podría durar por decirte una hora con un esquema estadounidense y en un ambiente estadounidense tranquilmamente a nosotros nos puede durar dos horas y media porque incluso te vas a poder tomar tu cafecito ahí en el medio hacer comprar un helado digamos pero bueno si hay la tendencia del estadounidense…

Q: Y como es eso recibido de parte de los Bolivianos, osea el hecho de tener que cambiar todo para tener así reuniones un poco más rígidas, ¿Cómo es recibido eso por los Bolivianos?  
A: Pues yo creo que hay diferentes opiniones. Osea desde un punto de vista conciliador y tolerante puedes decir caramba, si así piensan no está mal. Pero también hay personas que opinan que quienes se creerán mas o menos, y donde está lo riquísimo digamos de que quieres agarrar y estar mas suelta en una reunión. Ya te digo hay opiniones divididas, desde las que dicen bueno interesante también porque si tu ves claramente la efectividad de la reunión entre los técnicos y de metas, pero por el otro lado puedes llegar a … que algunos le caiga mal. No te podría decir que 50% están bien y otros mal, te tendría que decir que hay algunos que les cae bien y otros que les cae mal. Para los que no tienen conocimiento de la cultura de nosotros es peor todavía y creo que la solución sería combinar ambas, osea la estructurada y poco mas seria con esta cuestión cultural, con la dosis que le da el Boliviano, el Latino a las reuniones.

Question 5: Do U.S. American managers have a low-power distance culture? 
A: Bueno yo creo que esta pregunta tiene como 3 diferentes categorías. Yo creo que viene de la profesión y de la persona que se perfila en sus propios hechos ¿no? Digamos [inaudible] en Latinoamérica [inaudible] y aquellos que podrían ya digamos [inaudible] con un poco de dirección osea con un poderazgo mas americano de los directores, de financiadores, y tiene derecho como que a normar y a estar en todo. Además que no son plenamente respetuosos de la cultura entonces bueno y en todo tanto en los Estados Unidos como en Bolivia y en Latinoamérica hay a veces llegan a trabajar de manera autoritaria a ser tu supervisor no es cierto. Si pero tambien lo otro, osea de que a fines de que está siendo el financiado y que tiene el poder, y está llegando a un tercer mundo que mas o menos tienes que seguir sus normas y seguir sus reglas porque te está haciendo un favor. Entonces yo creo que hay de todo. Personas con las que a mí me ha tocado trabajar por suerte en instituciones que han sido así propuestas de los proyectos, sino los que sean [inaudible] a convocatorias digamos, entonces bueno había una necesidad y planteamos un proyecto, y toda esa supervisión digamos, hasta la construcción de monitoreo, de métodos, o autorías o evaluaciones, a punto de los temas como de [inaudible] pero
sí algunas veces he visto eso que dices, porque llega ese financiador, ese supervisor, o ese monitoreador, aunque nunca a veces cobijas a [inaudible] hay alguien que conoce todo, tal vez por eso [inaudible] pues uno poco mascarado, pero sí a veces cuando llegan al tercer mundo parecerían, los que no conocen, ignorantes digamos de esos procesos típicos y etc. [inaudible]

**Q:** ¿Puede hablar un poco despacio y más alto? Es que no le escupo nada. En realidad no le entendí muy bien lo que me dijo. Por lo menos esto de la distancia del poder cuando se refiere a su contrapartes Estadounidenses es por lo meno el tipo de igualdad que le dan a todo tipo de personas por lo menos en la oficina internacional, que de pronto no es tan igual que de parte de la oficina Boliviana? No sé si las diferencias que si entre el director nacional, los de monitoreo, los de evaluación, los empleados hasta la secretaria, y en cierta forma esta pregunta asume que en los Estados Unidos les dan el mismo respeto y la misma formalidad a todas las personas desde el director, hasta la secretaria hasta a los empleados, osea a todos en general. En otras palabras que para ellos la distancia del poder no está tan marcada o no la marcan tanto entre todos sus trabajadores. Osea tratan de que haya igualdad en todos los diferentes rangos pero de nuevo esto es lo que asume esta pregunta, ¿usted que opina de esto?

**A:** Sí osea por deportivo, sí yo creo que sí, si tienes a alguien viéndolo de allá pues creo que hay una igualdad de acercamiento de trabajo que es ha hecho por todos esos niveles que tu has mencionado.

**Q:** Pero ya va, ¿usted antes me había dicho que sí hay una distancia del poder en cuanto se refiere a los donantes?

**A:** Claro que mira cuando uno, en el ultimo financiamiento que hicimos, que si hay la tendencia a tratar a todos por igual, o como decías con los mismos derechos [inaudible], conversan de la misma manera con la secretaria, con el otero o con el propio director, y eso ya sí es cierto. Y lo otro era osea de pronto ya por ahí un financiamiento, un supervisor, un monitoreador técnico viene a ver [inaudible] Americano en el tercer mundo parecería que el tiene mas o menos conocimiento de los que tiene que agarrar y el tiene el poder de normar y de decidir que es lo técnico adecuado y lo que sea, y cuando es un Boliviano no es así, osea poniendo un donador si no le conoce las capacidades y los conocimientos al técnico en el lugar, pues ahí vas a perder en vez de ganar, digo no es de la mayoría de los [inaudible] pero algunas veces sí.

**Question 6:** Do U.S. American managers have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture?

**A:** Por lo menos lo de tomar los riesgos … está larga la pregunta. Bueno mas bien pienso lo contrario. Osea yo pienso de que eso de la incertidumbre es mas característica de nuestros países como Bolivia digamos, osea nosotros estamos tomando riesgos día a día, pero también yo veo que el Estadounidense justamente por la cultura que tiene, por lo estructurado técnico en llevar acabo las cosas, lo planificadores que son, osea tiene menos resistencia a estas incertidumbre y a esta toma de riesgos y bien pienso si no he entendido mal la pregunta es que el Latinoamericano o el Boliviano en estos casos en una situación de incertidumbre y de tomar riesgos y nada mas hablando de así de casos que hay de casos de incertidumbre para la gran mayoría de situaciones, el poder vivir en día al día para un porcentaje alto de población Boliviana ya es una costumbre y hay varios aspectos relacionados con el día cotidiano lo cierto es que …

**Q:** Y eso por lo menos en cuestión de los proyectos ¿cómo afecta? El hecho de que usted dice que los estadounidenses pues no les gusta tanto la incertidumbre de cierta forma

**A:** Bueno si hablamos de la población en general el Boliviano digamos, el vive en una situación de incertidumbre día a día, pero en el caso digamos osea de asumir, osea una institución con sus técnicos osea yo creo en poderes de evasión a la incertidumbre tu decías [inaudible] osea como
que las cosas se ponen un poco más normal digamos osea trata de evitar estas situaciones de
tomar riesgos permanentes. Ahora en cuestión de cómo afectaría más bien permanentemente la vida al vivir en riesgo, pues en los proyectos me decías, entonces yo creo que bueno como instituciones osea suben las instituciones Bolivianas [inaudible] y aprenden más bien a trabajar en ese riesgo, nada más para ponerle un ejemplo ahorita aquí en Bolivia, el rol de las ONGs está siendo
cuestionado pero sin embargo tu no ves que diga a los personeros en pánicos, osea es un
momento en trabajar en una ONG, un momento de hacer un trabajo técnico y bueno imagínate otra ocasión, otro momento si es que esto se cierra digamos ese trabajador técnico se pondrá a trabajar en otra actividad ojala técnica y no en cualquier otra cosa, entonces está más listo a enfrentar cualquier situación diaria porque las cosas son cambiantes no hay una apatía de estar en un trabajo según como [inaudible] ocurría con [inaudible] 40 años [inaudible] y mas la gente joven [inaudible]

Question 7: Do U.S. American managers have an individualistic culture?

A: Yo creo que sí tiene una dosis de verdad porque [inaudible] un profesional, un supervisor veo que está entrando en su trabajo sabiendo bien que hace su trabajo en la respuesta de dar inmediata a su supervisor o los resultados de los casos bajo su jurisdicción etc. Sí percibo de que es mas como un reto personal que digamos sentirse parte digamos de un proyecto de desarrollo [inaudible] es una lista digamos en lo picante osea en lo grande que es el impacto [inaudible] de una sociedad, pero ya te digo nunca me he puesto a analizar así con profundidad pero pienso que ese técnico, ese profesional que supervisa y es Estadounidense está pensando más en su éxito personal y sin ver, como se llama, osea ese trabajo que está haciendo, digamos en ese caso de propuestas, nada más [inaudible] en el impacto que tiene ese trabajo comunal, el de los técnicos, [inaudible] a nivel de comunidad que se van a beneficiar con estas intervenciones.

Q: Osea, en otras palabras usted dice que ellos están enfocados en como se están desempeñando cada persona en vez de cómo está resultando todo el proyecto en sí?

A: Sí me parece que es un porcentaje alto. Mas el éxito personal osea de realizar bien el trabajo que digamos pensar en algo mas digamos de asesoramiento técnico o de ventajas que puede tener de estar asesorándose técnicamente, que la gente pueda [inaudible] de ese momento o intervención y que esa supervisión es nada mas como te decía un momento una rayita en la instancia de lo que significa el implementar proyectos de desarrollo. Y esta es la percepción que tengo así de personas que llegan que las veo muy eficientes pero como que muy avocadas a su trabajo, parece que no pasa nada mas sino lo que vinieron a hacer, si es una auditoria en la dictación de un curso, o en la revisión de monitoreo, osea tienen que ser aparentemente muy buenos en eso, por lo menos no manifiestan lo importante que es ese momento de capacitación de revisión, de supervisión en todo el beneficio comunitario porque tienen que llegar a una institución, se contactan con técnicos, esos técnicos [inaudible] comparten e intercambian con ellos y al final, el producto final va a esa población que se beneficia ojalá con los proyectos.

Q: Y en ese caso, ¿usted cree que ellos tienden estar orientados hacia los logros?

A: Claro yo creo que como no lo manifiestan al momento de compartir, pero yo creo que mas ya te digo al logro del convenio pero tal vez no manifiestan que ellos están pensando que si su trabajo sea de dos o cinco días tiene efecto para el logro del proyecto pero te digo es una cuestión de actitud que no se puede agarrar y [inaudible]. Tal vez hay pocos momentos de cambiar, osea de poner tanto para los Bolivianos como para los Estadounidenses que lo importante no es cierto es el logro en la población y que todos los demás esfuerzos son rayitas no es cierto. Pero son [inaudible] que no se manifiestan tal vez porque no hay momento de decirlos.
Questions 8: Do U.S. American managers have a vertical individualistic culture?

A: Yo creo que se debe todo te digo, por lo menos hablando del director de mi oficina, osea creo que es una persona que tiene estas características bien osea un liderazgo bien participativo. [inaudible] entonces es una persona yo diría que el cree en un liderazgo compartido, delega, da experiencias, capacidad, pues todo no porque se pueda decir, pero también lo he visto las otras características, mas bien al contrario osea que el [inaudible] que tu has mencionado no se cumple. Osea y de esa forma no podría decir que todos los Estadounidenses son así. Yo diría que un 70% son tienen un liderazgo participativos, osea compartido, pero siempre hay algunas que no toman eso en cuenta.

Question 9: What is the leadership style of U.S. American managers?

A: Igual que la otra osea que hay … yo creo que hay dos aspectos, osea es muy posible que eso ocurra en el Estadounidense, en sus lugares, en su país por cierto y puede ser que existan las ganas para desarrollar y como se llama aplicar lo que sienten en su país y como hacen en su país, y cuando llegan acá como llegan en [inaudible] entonces piensa en la vida real osea no [inaudible] digamos tradición [inaudible] porque con mas de que Bolivia habrá democratización [inaudible] estructuras e implementarlos, osea tener un proyecto pues [inaudible] duralidad es difícil no es cierto, parecería del punto de vista Estadounidense que están con ganas de resultar que bonita [inaudible] Quechua pero cuando llega en calidad de administrador [inaudible] de esa temática en si y deja pasar luz ¿no? Osea que se [inaudible] del proyecto que bien en la mayoría de los cargos tienen sus proyectos pero hay una crítica de que justamente está respirando otras tradiciones comunes y etc. Persiste algo, simplemente los proyectos que se han utilizado dicen [inaudible] en el tema de la [inaudible] productiva, sería tomar, debería tomar el saber, el investigar las necesidades de la cultura Quechua [inaudible] y bueno adecuando los materiales y etc. ¿no? O quizá en esto de agricultura igual, osea tomar en cuenta las riquezas [inaudible] hacer eso sostenible [inaudible] pero a veces con eso de la temática como no es tan grande pues entonces a veces me imagino que como se [inaudible] deja pasar las otras cosas y se concentran en las metas estrictos y esto y esto y lo otro. Entonces ahora no estoy diciendo que solamente vas a ocupar el [inaudible] sino también [inaudible] proponentes digamos [inaudible] tiempo para este proyecto simplemente en [inaudible] osea conocer las necesidades [inaudible] de esas culturas en las que se ponen [inaudible] tal vez son fallas digamos mas [inaudible].

Question 10 and 11: Do U.S. American managers have a short-time orientation and a monochronic time orientation?

A: Si pues [inaudible] osea eso de que si los Estadounidenses pero no todos no, porque [inaudible] todo lo que tu has dicho [inaudible] pero ya te digo [inaudible] en ese caso [inaudible] si yo diría que si queda a veces si osea como un 70% o 80% pero si hay este otro tanto. Bueno tal vez, cuando uno elabora una propuesta quien sabe si como Boliviano perdería tiempo para hacer las actividades y quien sabes si no sea la misma percepción de lo directo no? Y digamos para lo que sea [inaudible] yo si creo que esas son las características de una gran mayoría de los Estadounidenses en un ámbito de proyectos, y esto no siempre [inaudible] osea esa manera de vivir siempre estamos hablando de la población general por lo que si del dinero, por lo de que si el tiempo, por lo de si la diversión [inaudible] nosotros nos tenemos que acordar

**Question 12:** How do you usually communicate with the international office?  

**A:** principalmente por email, después está el teléfono y las conversaciones son mitad en Inglés y mitad en Castellano. Si hay personas que hablan Inglés entonces sólo hablan Inglés pero hay unas que otras que sólo hablan Castellano.  

**Question 13:** How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?  

**A:** Es fácil para las personas que hablamos Inglés.  

**Question 14:** Is there a language barrier with the U.S. American managers?  

**A:** No osea no hay ninguna barrera.  

**Question 15:** What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?  

**A:** No, yo creo que hemos cubierto puntos bien importantes. A partir de que se ponga la cultura del otro adelante, yo creo que vamos a estar bien y vamos a seguir avanzando.  

**Interview 6:** May 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2008  

**Question 1:** What traits do U.S. American managers share?  

**A:** Sí creo que en general para un americano promedio eso aplica pero en mi experiencia del tipo de americano que trabaja en cooperación internacional, no aplican un 100% yo diría que aplican 60-70% pienso que es un poco por el tipo de perfil que tiene la persona americana que llega a trabajar en desarrollo internacional. Entonces yo diría que hay dos tipos de personas unas que son mas administradores públicos que trabajan tal vez justamente en las funciones del país, pues diría que concuerdan en casi 100% de los puntos que usted ha dicho, pero la gente que está en la operatividad día a día en los proyectos creo que llega a casi entender un poco mas algunas características que tienen los Latinos, en el momento de trabajar. Entonces ya no tienen tanto problemas para comprender, son gente que es mucho mas abierta, en el [inaudible] personal. Pero creo que la mayoría aplica a la mayoría de los Americanos pero no aplicaría a la gran mayoría de Americanos que trabajan en desarrollo.
Q: Y por lo menos, de las características que sí están presentes, ¿Cómo usted cree que ellas afectan al desarrollo de las propuestas y ejecución de proyectos?
A: Definitivamente, el hecho que la persona sea americana sí crea una distancia en las gestiones públicas porque generalmente esas personas tiene cargos ejecutivos ahora, entonces creo que básicamente por eso es que la gente común construyen, tienen mucho más [inaudible] la gente americana que se respeta de otra forma con poder que con un Latino que tenga el mismo guía? Pero creo que eso es un poco porque saben que americanos tienen un modo de trabajar distintos y aquí hay una jerarquía y una capacidad de tomar unas decisiones sobre el proyecto injustas, entonces creo que sí así es [inaudible] Americana independientemente de cuantos diga ese Standard que usted describe, hace que la gente los vea, pienso que sí hay una relación específica entre la persona local y el extranjero. Creo que es independientemente de que sean Americanos o Europeos.

Question 2: Do U.S. American managers have a low-context culture?
A: Creo que esa característica sí explica a la gran mayoría de los Americanos, veo de hecho en algunos momentos si me da o genera algún tipo de acómplice pero sí hay diferencias como pares [inaudible] en ese genero. Entonces a nosotros nos gusta probar un poco la píldora antes de tragarla y el hecho de que la comunicación es más directa, en algunos casos puede llegar a causar dificultades con los Bolivianos.

Q: Y por lo menos ¿cómo se ve este aspecto o como afecta este aspecto al desarrollo de propuestas de proyectos en Bolivia?
A: Bueno creo que deberían ser más perspectivos ¿porqué? Porque le da un toque gerencial al tema de proyectos, el hecho de que para dar una orden, la orden es explícita y clara y no es una orden ambigua o no se sabe exactamente que es lo que la otra persona quiere, desde ese punto yo si creo que es positivo y le ayuda y de hecho en muchos casos hasta se vuelve parte de la costumbre, de la acción y de hecho yo creo que es productivo. Creemos de que se vuelve un poco de nuestra parte mentira, de que la persona se vuelva explícita en su forma de relacionamiento, está un poco mas en los puntos administrativos en los puntos humanos donde a la gente acá le gustaría escuchar un poco más de contexto, de cómo entrar, de porque sí o porque no? Pero de parte ya operativa de los proyectos ayuda, ayuda a que las cosas se hagan y que se hagan como se tienen que hacer y sin dejar espacio a dudas.

Question 3: What is the communication pattern of U.S. American managers?
A: Sí yo creo que eso aplica a la mayoría de la gente que han trabajando aquí en Bolivia y que toman decisiones basadas en las necesidades estéticas de los proyectos que en los sentimientos que puedan haber personales con las personas. Definitivamente yo creo que eso es positivo para el proyecto porque separan lo uno de lo otro y eso ayuda a que las cosas salgan mas [factibles, partidas] de lo que podrían salir en otras condiciones. El hecho de que tengan eso, de que los Americanos tengan esas características de comunicación ayuda a que las relaciones tomen una forma más rápida y más directa y como si fueran bajo otras condiciones bien específicas que si el jefe fuera un Latino.
Q: Y usted ¿cómo cree que este aspecto es percibido por los Bolivianos?
A: Yo creo que la mayoría de los Bolivianos que trabajan en desarrollo entienden perfectamente estas diferencias. Puede ser que para una persona nueva en el área si le choque que las ordenes y
las instrucciones sean tan frías pero con el tiempo la gente se acostumbra, y no creo que ese sea un factor muy importante en el desarrollo de los proyectos.

**Question 4: What is the meeting style of U.S. American managers?**

**A:** Creo que no, osea son mucho mas concisos pero creo que el hecho de que el perfil del Americano que trabaja en desarrollo sea de [inaudible] de perfil promedio hace de que tenga mucho mas sensibilidad de sobre cómo se lleva una reunión. En mi experiencia es que la gente, osea el Americano con el que estoy acostumbrado a trabajar en desarrollo es mucho más … trata de parecer a alguien que dirigiría una reunión, a un Boliviano que dirigiría una reunión, entonces el contexto es mucho mas divino en esa agenda, enriquece la agenda con otro tipo de comentarios, no es tan puntual. Creo que en lo que se trata de reuniones con varios Bolivianos, donde se tiene varios Americanos y varios Bolivianos tratan de que sean las reuniones mas parecidas a las que se tendrían acá entre Bolivianos osea una reunión normal definitivamente pero esa reunión parecida no creo que sean tan ejecutivos como, es decir, no tan ejecutivos, tan directos al punto como si fuera una reunión exclusivamente de Americanos.

**Question 5: Do U.S. American managers have a low-power distance culture?**

**A:** Definitivamente esto es algo que a menos aquí en la institución se ve, no es una jerarquía tan marcada sino mas bien es una administración bastante horizontal, que tiene sus ventajas porque la gente se siente incluida, se siente parte del proyecto pero también tiene de repente algunas desventajas desde el punto de vista de que hay mucha [libertad, igualdad] de las jerarquías y no hay momento de un tratado abierto para estar contentos pero si hay algún problema cuesta mucho mas identificar las responsabilidades sobre ese problema que se da. Sin embargo, sí definitivamente la administración, la forma de manejo institucional de los Americanos es mucho mas horizontal de la que fuera de un Boliviano.

**Q:** En respecto a las ventajas y desventajas, ¿me podría dar algún ejemplo?

**A:** Por ejemplo, a la gente, [inaudible] para tomar algún tipo de decisión de los proyectos muchas veces hay que dejarle esa decisión a alguien que no [inaudible] da [inaudible] en este momento del país y bueno entonces el hecho de que participe y pueda contribuir a la solución de cualquier problema los hace sentir parte del acuerdo entonces [inaudible] eso es suficiente porque ha contribuido y eso es lo que lo hace llamativo como proyecto. Por otro lado, el momento que hay algún proyecto, alguna actividad tiene algún problema el hecho de que varias personas hayan participado en la toma de decisiones puede de que no se logre identificar quien es el responsable final de la actividad entonces eso nos ha pasado muchas veces y al final no sabemos a quien cortarle la cabeza no sabemos a quien porque mucha gente ha participado en la actividad y en el momento de condecorar es mas sencillo, se condecora a todos y punto. Eso es algo que no se ve en Bolivia con frecuencia pero que sí sucede con alguna regularidad acá en la organización.

**Q:** Y por lo menos eso de que no se pueda identificar quien fue la persona que falló, ¿cómo usted cree que afecta a los proyectos en sí?

**A:** Bueno afortunadamente no es algo de todos los días pero creo que el principal problema es que es mucho mas difícil tomar medidas correctivas cuando ha pasado algo malo porque al haber tantos involucrados no se sabe cómo ni con quien hablar ni cómo [regañar] con seguridad. Y si afecta al proyecto porque las medidas correctivas toman mucho mas tiempo que si estuviera una persona identificada directamente.
Question 6: Do U.S. American managers have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: Acá en Bolivia como se imaginará, la incertidumbre en general sobre varios aspectos incluyendo cooperación internacional es bastante grande. Creo que los Americanos que han o están trabajando aquí en los proyectos han logrado asimilar muy bien todo ese tema de incertidumbre acá en Bolivia y lo manejan sin ningún problema. También me preguntaba si yo creo que ellos tampoco tienen problemas con los cambios? Bueno yo creo que sí, yo creo que ellos están dispuestos a tomar posiciones donde puedan atender estrategias dentro del proyecto, están dispuestos a asumir nuevos riesgos sin ningún problema, no he visto ninguna señal que me diga ¡no! Que prefieren estar en el status quo para con gente con la que trabaja acá, es definitivamente gente que asume los riesgos, no tiene problemas con los cambios y que sabe lidiar con la incertidumbre. Por ejemplo, el proyecto mas grande que tenemos acá es de desarrollo alternativo entonces cuando también la administración anterior entró el presidente Morales obviamente había mucha incertidumbre sobre que política se iba a tomar en el tema de coca. Y básicamente tuvimos aproximadamente 6 meses sin saber qué era lo que iba a hacer el gobierno, si iba a mantener la política anterior o si iba a planificar, a modificar o si iba a legalizar todo. Sin embargo durante esos 6 meses el proyecto estuvo es decir buscando formas de poder trabajar independientemente de conocer la política y digamos lo paradójico del proyecto apoye las políticas del gobierno. Entonces no saber que apoyar me parece un muy buen ejemplo de lo difícil de la situación en ese momento que no sabían exactamente como apoyar, sin embargo con la variación que teníamos en ese momento encontramos varias oportunidades dentro de ese ambiente gris que había de cómo apoyar, de cómo seguir trabajando en ambas áreas y eso obligó a hacer varios cambios en el proyecto tanto estratégicos y cambios geográficos, cambios programáticos desde la forma en la que estábamos trabajando, y cambios geográficos que digamos fueron llevados sin ningún o sin mayor problema y luego una vez que se definieron las estrategias del gobierno, que el gobierno ya tenía un poco mas claro las políticas que iba a llevar nuevamente volvimos a ajustarnos a esas políticas sin ningún problema entonces el proyecto actualmente con en el que estamos trabajando modificaciones al convenio que le hagamos con nuestro financiador, le damos ya nuevas modificaciones, decidimos unas tres, cuatro, así modificaciones menores, la mayoría son modificaciones que son de forma de fondo del proyecto que han sido realizadas por los jefes del proyecto, así que [inaudible] con mucha participación algo importante acá de destacar es que sí las personas Americanas han involucrado en ese proceso de decisiones estratégicas del proyecto a sus contrapartes Bolivianas.

Question 7: Do U.S. American managers have an individualistic culture?

A: No. Creo que nuevamente comparten sí la mayoría de los Americanos tal vez están en temas [margen?] de esa línea. Nuevamente creo que la gente que va trabajando en desarrollo internacional quiere decir que tiene otros valores y otras visiones y no que no son flexibles. Osea me cuesta pensar que son mas individualistas de lo que sería un Boliviano en otro medio. Tienen creo una cosa premisita porque todos, osea en todos los entornos comunales, en su entorno de relaciones humanas se preocupan de que les vaya bien, tienen una preocupación muy alta por el equipo con el que trabajan, tienen un compromiso con la gente con la cual trabajan osea tienen principios y me cuesta enmarcar a un Americano promedio que trabaja en desarrollo en estos o ese marco. Pero estaba pensando un poco también en cuanto podría ganar alguien que tiene una maestría en la misma área pero en Estados Unidos, y sin embargo está acá trabajando en Bolivia.
Pues trabajar en Bolivia o en cualquier otro país de desarrollo no debe de ser, no deben tener un nivel de vida bastante alta. Entonces no me parece clasificarlos dentro de un margen tan cerrado como el que ha descrito.

Questions 8: Do U.S. American managers have a vertical individualistic culture?

A: Sí, creo que, veo lo que les interesa no es la actividad sino el resultado de la actividad al final del día. Entonces definitivamente es gente que van directo a la actividad, pero siempre la pregunta detrás de eso es: ¿para qué la vamos a hacer? ¿Qué vamos a conseguir? ¿Qué resultado vamos a tener después de hacer esa actividad? El enfoque es mucho mayor a resultados que lo que tendría también algún Boliviano.

Question 9: What is the leadership style of U.S. American managers?

A: Definitivamente creo que el tipo de liderazgo que tiene un Americano osea otorga muchas libertades muchos he llamados? a sus subalternos y me parece una buena forma de rendimiento? Jerarquía? donde básicamente les da las líneas generales y luego dejan que ellos se desempeñen, sin embargo creo que un problema que afecta a los técnicos es que no tienen la capacidad para identificar con que personas pueden crear todas esas libertades y con que personas no pueden hacerlo, entonces … creo que … y no sé si es algo mas … diría yo complica a los premérios? inaudible? en especial sino también tiene que ver en un problema inaudible es lo mas normal en muchos casos sucede que la persona no tiene una línea clara de mando no hay muy pro-activa y no rinde como debería rendir, entonces puede que el americano diga te di todo lo que tenías, te di todo el poder y todo lo que necesitabas para que llevar adelante la actividad y nunca entregaste resultados y la persona por el otro lado dice, pero tu nunca me dijiste lo que tenías que hacer. Entonces creo, no estoy seguro si eso es algo mas de Boliviano o Americano o si es algo que está independientemente del ámbito si es algo del tema personal, porque hay personas que necesitan mas guía y otras personas que pueden asumir la responsabilidad de llevar adelante su tarea una vez que se ha dicho que tarea es.

Q: ¿Pero usted diría que eso es la mayoría o la minoría?

A: Pues yo diría que como 50-50 de personas que reciben esta confianza, que reciben estas capacidades y otras que no saben responder de la misma forma 50%.

Q: Entonces según lo que usted dice, a los Americanos se les hace difícil saber como diferenciar este tipo de personas, ¿a las que se les puede confiar responsabilidades y a las que no?

A: Sí, además creo que un Americano que recién haya llegado a Latinoamérica va a tener muchos problemas en saber identificar quien es quien.

Question 10: Do U.S. American managers have a short-time orientation?

A: No creo que eso afecte a la mayoría de gente Americana que trabaja en desarrollo, osea la gente que tiene ciertas profesiones tal vez no veo que estén muy arraigada a las tradiciones, a las tradiciones Americanas. Veo que sí es cierto que pueden adoptar fácilmente algunas tradiciones de donde estén viviendo pero mas por el tema social, el tema de inaudible transferido, no los veo particularmente muy arraigados a sus ancestros y si creo que tienen una visión de futuro, es decir de ver que es lo que quieren hacer en el futuro pero no solamente en forma personal sino
además forma es decir en que termina un proyecto osea es decir, tienen claro donde ven el proyecto en un x tiempo. No creo que sea gente que vive pensando en su pasado y del ‘qué había’ sino tiene claro un futuro tanto para ellos como para el proyecto donde ellos trabajan.

**Question 11: Do U.S. American managers have a monochronic time orientation?**

**A:** No yo no creo a no ser que los Americanos los que trabajan aquí en Bolivia por lo menos mas de cinco años pero después digamos los Americanos que están en la misión no me parecen gente muy preocupada por el tiempo, no son gente que están metidas trabajando en varias cosas simultáneamente. Gente que si se preocupan porque las cosas salgan a tiempo, que se preocupan porque no hayan retrasos en las actividades, pero no me parece gente muy como que demarca esas características que usted describe. Creo que trabajar en desarrollo da el derecho de tener de hecho que su gama de cosas ama definitivamente no solamente [inaudible] sino también la posición de contribuir al desarrollo hacen que la clase del tiempo es dinero no aplique en un 100% para ellos, todavía que sea gente bien desprenda del dinero, pero saben que el tema de desarrollo esto significa mas que hay otros tipos y el tema de maximizar los beneficios o la rentabilidad de una empresa. Entonces creo que la lógica la que usted ha dicho de [flexibilidad] no aplicaría a la mayoría de Americanos que trabajan en desarrollo.

**Q:** Y por lo menos en cuestión de la fechas límites y en relación a lo que son las propuestas y todo eso o en relación a las fechas límites de cuando hay que tener listo algo para el proyecto cuando se está ejecutando, en ese sentido ¿cómo es?

**A:** Creo que hay dos tipos de fechas límites. La primera es una que sí se cumple y se cumple a [inaudible] tabla, que es cuando la fecha límite es parada por alguna externalidad, es decir la misión, es decir puede ser el gobierno o por cualquier institución fuera de nuestra institución que se pase principalmente la fecha límite, sí definitivamente los plazos se cumplen, las fechas se cumplen, y hay una programación muy estricta y tenemos toda una … no hay flexibilidades en life. Ese es el aspecto. Pero cuando se trata de una fecha donde habiendo unos priorities, que se puede pedir una prórroga, que se puede negociar, que hay algo de flexibilidad que nadie se va a morir si se entrega unos minutos más tarde o unos días más tarde, entonces definitivamente no hace falta medir … el hecho de que haya llegado una tesis para una actividad así no necesariamente implica que es la fecha final. Y eso es algo ya que creo que todos van asimilando y lo entienden. Por ejemplo, cuando uno prepara una propuesta para USAID se sabe que es una fecha totalmente cerrada. De hecho estamos trabajando en una propuesta ahora, entonces hicimos un plan de trabajo corre a esa fecha para cumplir con la propuesta en la fecha indicada. Pero las fechas con las cuales se trabaja en mente cumplen con otras [diversidades?] entonces por ejemplo nos ponen una fecha de afuera, y aquí dentro nos organizamos de tal forma de que nosotros cumplimos también nuestras propias fechas, sin embargo, un ejemplo del otro caso, osea una fecha que nos fija internamente y que nos fijamos internamente la fecha para entregar el manual operativo para una x fecha, sin embargo que es algo bien importante pero no urgente entonces en vez de entregarlo … de hecho nos ha tomado dos meses después de la fecha que hemos fijado porque sabíamos que no era algo que alguien se moría si no teníamos el manual operativo. Creo que tanto los … a pesar que obviamente los Americanos estuvieron muy involucrados en los aspectos iniciales y demás, nunca hubo un malestar ni ninguna llamada de atención porque no se cumplían los plazos, también un poco porque todo el mundo entiende lo ocupado de las agendas y lo ocupado si empezamos con las cosas mas urgentes delegamos siempre las cosas importantes. Ese es un mal que tenemos acá particularmente.
Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?

A: Generalmente vía email y en algunos casos telefónico pero 100% digital y generalmente en Inglés.

Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?

A: Para mí, yo tengo muy buena receptividad de información así que no tengo ningún problema.

Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the U.S. American managers?

A: Sí pero se debe un poco mas a mi nivel de Inglés a el nivel del Español de ellos, no creo que sean barreras de no entendernos, sino mas interna de tener que digamos, si fueran los dos lados 100% bilingües yo no sentiría ningún problema de comunicación. En cuanto a las propuestas, la ventaja es que generalmente las propuestas son generadas en los dos idiomas, entonces cuando yo participo en alguna propuesta hago la parte en Español o hago mi parte en Español y ellos se quedan con la parte final en Español y luego traducida al Inglés. Luego me toca [inaudible] osea todo aquello que se hizo en Inglés se tradujo al Español entonces para que tenga coherencia y lo mismo sucede [inaudible] la parte producida de Español e Inglés para que ya todo [inaudible] tenga flujo y coherencia. Entonces si [inaudible] una ventaja.

Q: ¿Pero tienen personas que hablan Inglés en la oficina?
A: Aquí en la oficina yo diría que el Inglés subió no mucho, osea el que pueda sostener una conversación en Inglés yo diría que … digamos Boliviano con Inglés fluido tal vez unas cinco personas. Que conozcan o que tengan conocimientos básicos si quizás unas 17 personas.

Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?

A: Yo creo que en las propuestas si se ve un poco de desconexión porque de hecho las propuestas son hechas mas que todo en los Estados Unidos o vienen de allá de Estados Unidos y aquí un poco la acomodan, pero en el momento ya de [inaudible] unas desconexiones de falta de conocimiento de la cultura acá, pero en el momento que se elabora la propuesta o ya se ponen inclusive el proyecto veo pocas … yo diría que mas bien eso es un modo ventajoso, un modo ventajoso de tener esas dos culturas y creo que nuevamente se trata [inaudible] de la parte buena de ambas culturas para el bien de los proyectos así que yo no vería el hecho de tener proyectos bajo la influencia de dos culturas como un problema sino mas bien como una ventaja.

Q: ¿Osea es diferente depende de la etapa en la que esté el proyecto?
A: Sí definitivamente.

Q: Y eso que usted mencionó acerca de las desconexiones, ¿a qué se refería con eso??
A: Me refiero a que muchos temas de referencia, muchas solicitudes para convocar propuestas son elaboradas en los Estados Unidos con poco conocimiento de la realidad, entonces uno lee los temas de referencias de esas solicitudes y se da cuenta que no con alguien en Estados Unidos que no tiene ningún tipo de [inaudible] lo ha hecho, pero no mas [inaudible] de la propuesta ya es, el hecho de tener un equipo de dos culturas ayuda mucho a de que bueno el Americano diga bueno aquí lo que esto quiere decir es esto, y el Boliviano diga bueno entonces lo haremos así, y creo que ayuda mucho en relación a la pregunta así como dicen en la ejecución del proyecto es como digo una ventaja tener dos culturas involucradas.
Question 1: What traits do U.S. American managers share?

A: Mire yo de las personas que, una jefa que tuve, cumple con la mayoría d eso pero no con todos los criterios. Porque evidentemente que si fuera un Americano del tipo que nunca ha salido fuera de su país y que por primera experiencia está trabajando en algún otro país, pues cumple con todos esos criterios. En la persona con la que yo tuve oportunidad de trabajar, una Americana pero que ya había vivido mucho tiempo en África, en Asia, y pues acá en Latino América también, entonces había ya también logrado tener otra forma de comportamiento que no lo ha dado el Americano típico. Pero el Americano tipo yo creo que sí cumple con lo que usted menciona. Generalmente, y eso va a dos estrados es como cuando, usted sabe que el marco lógico lo creo USAID para los proyectos y entonces eso refleja mucho lo que ha mencionado usted osea de que está centrado a los resultados pero que muy difícilmente cambian el comportamiento de bueno este proyecto, tenía que vacunar a 10 personas y vacuna a 10, pero ¿porqué no podemos vacunar a 12? Llegan a veces a esos extremos están muy centrados en los resultados pero tampoco se mueven. Yo creo que en forma general el Americano tipo que no ha tenido una oportunidad de estar fuera de su país yo creo que cumple con todos esos criterios.

Question 2: Do U.S. American managers have a low-context culture?

A: Sí yo diría más que hasta el Estadounidense, el Inglés, pero algo más le complementaría yo. Es el hecho que el idioma Inglés es un poco así. En el idioma Inglés uno no puede estar con mucha divagación, o es sí o es no, o es azul o es blanco, no hay que podría ser entre azul y blanco, medio un celeste, entonces eso hace que el idioma también en su forma de comunicarse pues haga que las personas pues se comuniquen así en forma más directa.

Q: ¿Y como usted cree que esto influye lo que era la preparación de los proyectos o la ejecución de los proyectos en sí?

A: En que este, quizás nuestra cultura como Latino que somos, es más de la comunicación pero del otro tipo. Pero cuando hacemos la comunicación con la persona que proviene de los Estados Unidos, osea es mas fácil en el sentido que no hay mucha ambigüedad. Osea que tienes que hacer algo y todo es así. Yo he aprendido mucho cuando estuve en otro país haciendo mi maestría, el Inglés en el hecho de ser más concreto. Yo creo que eso ayuda mucho en lograr objetivos también concretos.

Q: ¿Y cómo es eso percibido por el resto de los compañeros Bolivianos?

A: No es bien percibido porque como que queda la persona centrada mucho en resultados y este a nosotros nos interesan más las relaciones quizás como Latino. Pero en el caso concreto mío, he tenido la oportunidad de vivir al exterior, entonces conozco mucho de ese tipo de culturas y no me afectan porque sé porqué lo hacen. Al Americano le interesa que porque le pagan para lograr eso, pues lo tiene que lograr, porque si no logra eso entonces es un mal profesional. A nosotros nos interesa de que si al lograr eso o pretender lograr eso este podemos estar quedando mal con algunas personas que se van a ver afectadas por ese logro, no lo hacemos, y nos vamos mas a lo sentimental, en cambio el Americano no. Está centrado mas al interés de todos sus resultados.

Q: ¿Y esto también se refleja por lo menos en el tipo de población que se va a ayudar?

A: Por eso es de que quizás para trabajar con la población en sí, le cuesta mucho más ingresar. Y la persona fuera un operador de proyecto, pues le costaría mas porque la gente lógicamente a
un menor nivel de formación pues entiende menos que es lo que se tiene que hacer y cuida más a ese nivel, es más importante la relación todavía, que a un nivel ejecutivo lógicamente.

**Question 3: What is the communication pattern of U.S. American managers?**

**A:** Yo creo que va más bien en relación a la profesión. Yo la jefa que tuve era psicóloga y ella sí le ponía mucho corazón a las cosas pero este en el caso de otro director que tuvimos que era trabajador social, sí era más frío. Entonces yo diría que va muy íntimamente relacionado con el tipo de profesión que tiene el profesional.

**Question 4: What is the meeting style of U.S. American managers?**

**A:** Sí, yo creo que esa es una de las características que tiene el Americano.

**Q:** Y por lo menos si en una reunión hay mitad Americanos y mitad Bolivianos, ¿usted como piensa que los Bolivianos se sienten estando en este estilo de reunión?

**A:** Osea si nos sentimos cómodos en ese ambiente?

**Q:** Sí

**A:** Yo veo que el Americano en una parte de lo que siempre he buscado es el resultado. A mí me parece bien de que también quiero que siempre esté dicho, me pagan para hacer algo porque entonces tengo que lograr alcanzar alguna meta o algún objetivo entonces si uno está centrado a resultados pues que lo haga de una manera muy amable o de una manera muy fría, no afecta mucho, siempre que uno logre su resultado. Porque si uno se formó como profesional es para lograr resultados ¿no? Entonces yo creo que también. Bueno por lo menos en el caso de mis compañeros Bolivianos, al comienzo como que chocan un poco, lo que...hay una gran diferencia en quizás los sistemas de control que manejamos, que no lo ha mencionado usted pero es que el Americano maneja otro tipo de control. Y yo he aprendido mucho de personas tanto de la cooperación de USAID, de la cooperación Americana en es que sus sistemas de control son diferentes, osea no están viendo esta crisis de ayer...no sino más bien ¿dónde están tus resultados? Que hiciste ayer no me interesa pero algo tenés que haber estado haciendo entonces ¿dónde esta tu resultado? Si tengo un día pero te tardaste 20, si pero si lo planificamos así sigamos adelante ¿no? Entonces quizás a las personas nos choca un poco, al Boliviano digamos, le puede chocar mucho pero al final se logra adaptar, se logra entender esta necesidad de la búsqueda de resultados en un trabajo.

**Question 5: Do U.S. American managers have a low-power distance culture?**

**A:** A la hora de agarrar y mostrar quien como organización...cuando había que mostrarle y darle su lugar, pero no es un poder como que el decir: que porque soy jefe acá tengo que estar por encima tuyo, como es lo tradicional en la cultura nuestra mas bien. Acá al jefe pues hay que pues sentarlo arriba y yo de abajo lo miraré. En cambio en la cultura Americana, sí se da que yo puedo estar al lado del jefe y no incomodarle no? y especialmente en las Organizaciones No Gubernamentales pues no hay tanta jerarquía. Conozco mucho de mi organización y de otras ONGs aquí en Bolivia y no hay esa jerarquía en el sentido de decir tu te sientas acá y yo me siento a este otro lado, y si vas tu en una movilidad tu tienes que ir atrás porque yo soy el jefe y tengo que ir adelante o viceversa ¿no? No hay ese estilo más bien la cultura y eso lo reflejaba todo lo que era el reglamento interno de mi organización, tenía yo los mismos derechos y las mismas obligaciones que el director.
Entonces ¿usted también cree que esto lo trae el director en sí?. Que ellos quieren que todo el mundo tenga los mismos derechos o como la pregunta lo decía ¿mas hacia la igualdad?

A: Sí, si hay una diferencia entre el Americano y el Boliviano. El Americano tiende a tratar por igual a todos y a respetar a todos por igual. En cambio para nosotros, los Bolivianos, en lo personal no hago diferencia, pero la generalidad es de que si yo tengo que saludar al portero, voy a saludarlo de una manera no tan cortés como saludo a mi jefe ¿no? Eso es lo que sucede en nuestro medio. Pero la mayoría de Americanos he notado que no existe esa diferencia.

Question 6: Do U.S. American managers have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: Yo creo de que la parte de la supervisión vuelve a mucha relación con la seguridad o inseguridad de la persona. Si yo se que en ese sentido he visto yo muchos profesionales que no solamente han logrado llegar a espacios de dirección de instituciones sin quizá haber tenido la madurez profesional necesaria. ¿Porque motivos? Porque se han postulado y no hubieron otros postulantes y cumplían con el perfil teórico pero en la práctica quizás no. La realidad nuestra, bueno en el caso mío, ha sido que tuve la suerte de haber vivido en otros países también y haberme formado en otras áreas, entonces a veces he visto la diferencia de cuando viene un profesional bien formado de cuando viene un profesional que está recién empezando su formación. Entonces difiere de esa relación, si el profesional, es un profesional Americano que tiene una buena formación pues no va tener temor en hacer una supervisión que sea, como decimos, de facilitar procesos, no solamente de ir a controlar si cumpliste o no cumpliste, sino decir ¡oye! ¿en que te ayudo?, no solamente decir de que porque soy el supervisor yo tengo saber mas que ti, es que a veces tu no tienes la disponibilidad de recursos para haber cumplido con tu tarea, pues veamos como te podemos ayudar. No que yo voy a hacer tu tarea, tu la tienes que hacer y en ese sentido, pues se facilitan muchas veces los procesos sin necesidad de hacer la tarea, que es lo que a veces uno en nuestro medio espera, que venga mi supervisor y me ayude a hacer la tarea. Cuando el Americano lo que espera es que casa uno haga su tarea. Si simplemente en la supervisión se trata de facilitar el proceso nada mas.

Question 7 and 8: Do U.S. American managers have an individualistic and vertical individualistic culture?

A: Si yo creo que es mas individualista, en ese sentido. Además escoge un poco lo que yo veo en la organización es de que como son personas que vienen por un tiempo y luego se cambian pues tratan de evitar el ingresar en mucha relación con las personas en lo privado porque eso haría un poquito como que, lo ven como que se comprometerían como a veces decimos acá en nuestro medio. El que yo sea el amigo del director pues este ya me dar ciertas ventajas decimos, el poder llegar tarde, el poder quizás tomarle algunas horas mas. Osea eso es la cultura nuestra y por eso el Americano trata de mantenerse un poco en lo individual en la relación con las personas, son como relación de grupo, quizás es la forma de vida la que los lleva a que no, no mismo ocurre con otros, no es este algo diferente a lo que ocurre en Europa, inclusive en la misma España, a pesar de que hablamos el mismo idioma que ellos, sin embargo, viven bajo otro modelo. Es la misma sociedad la que exige de que ¿para que necesito conocerlo a mi vecino? Si mi vecino no me presta nada ni me da ningún beneficio, total yo necesito simplemente vivir en un departamento y listo. No conocer a nadie en mi entorno, osea nos volvemos muy individualistas por la forma de vida. Cuando viene el Americano acá a nuestros países pues tiene esa dificultad de que acá se vive mucho en familia, todavía hay reuniones donde se reúne la
familia grande, pues hay reuniones donde viene toda la oficina, eso como que le asusta un poco, porque como que lo ve que si al estar en una reunión perdiera su poder luego en la dirección de la institución o de la dirección del cargo que ocupa ¿no?  
**Q:** ¿Cómo que lo comprometería?  
**A:** Exactamente por un lado, pero también es un sentimiento que quizá no lo han experimentado y que cuando lo experimenta le da miedo. Eso yo diría un poco más en mi percepción, porque el Americano que al final logra entender un poco la cultura latina, mucho [béisbol?] pues ya retornan a Estados Unidos pero con la añoranza de volver a trabajar en nuestros países ¿no?  
**Q:** Y ¿cómo cree usted que esto afecta a la preparación o desarrollo de proyectos en Bolivia?  
**A:** Yo creo que afecta en el sentido positivo porque por un lado nos hace centrarnos más en buscar resultados, pero por otro lado al no haber una comunicación pues quizás la sostenibilidad de los proyectos se pone en riesgo, porque si bien es cierto que todo proyecto tiene una fecha límite y una fecha de finalización pues el agarrar y hacer proyectos que tengan un inicio y un fin que después se mueran al finalizar el proyecto no tienen mucho sentido. Y esa falta de comunicación más abierta que tiene el Americano quizás no permite de que los proyectos puedan después de financiados, puedan tener una vida propia porque no da la apertura a que las organizaciones, es la pelea que estamos nosotros tratando de conseguir este desde que he trabajado en la organización de que una vez termine el proyecto ¿qué hay después de hacer el proyecto? Porque nosotros sabemos que nuestra gente va a seguir ahí con los mismos problemas si nosotros no les enseñamos a caminar solos, en ese sentido el Americano no mira un poco esa sostenibilidad a futuro. En ese sentido puede ser que afecte mucho la continuidad después de la finalización del proyecto.

**Question 9:** What is the leadership style of U.S. American managers?  

**A:** Sí eso yo lo he vivido en la organización y me ha permitido empoderarme mucho, osea tener facilidad para que yo pueda proponer a mi supervisora crecer en algunas áreas me ha permitido hacerlo, y por otro lado también no tener una cultura muy cerrada en cuanto a dónde debo yo también ir apuntando como profesional. Yo creo que es muy cierto eso y en la mayoría de organizaciones que yo conozco pues están centradas más en que cado uno pueda cumplir con lo que debe hacer porque además las reglas del juego las tienen muy claras.  
**Q:** ¿Y esto como cree que influyen los proyectos en sí?  
**A:** Es bueno porque este permite que nosotros los profesionales locales tengamos la oportunidad de quizás de hacer algunas pequeñas modificaciones que puedan redundar en un mejor resultado de los proyectos ¿no? Porque va también en beneficio de que la organización, como organización se beneficie porque se logra un resultado que aparentemente no estaba previsto pero que se ha alcanzado.

**Question 10:** Do U.S. American managers have a short-time orientation?  

**A:** En mi organización nosotros tenemos una política sobre género, una política sobre el acoso y yo creo que además nuestros procesos de selección están orientados a no hacer ningún tipo de discriminación ni de tipo étnico, ni de tipo religioso, político, osea no se hace ningún tipo de discriminación. En algunas organizaciones, he visto que se discrimina por aspectos políticos o religiosos. Son algunas organizaciones que son de origen relacionado mas con la parte religiosa y especialmente con la parte evangélica entonces se solicita de que, bueno no se coloca abiertamente pero al momento de seleccionar pues eligen a personas que tengan una religión...
similar a las que ellos profesan como organización. Pero en mi organización yo no he visto nada de eso.

**Q:** ¿Entonces usted cree que ellos están más orientados a las cosas que pasaron antes o más hacia el futuro o hacia el presente?

**A:** Bueno yo creo que se ve mucho hacia el futuro. Se trabaja mucho en base a decisiones. Son organizaciones que permanentemente están haciendo planes estratégicos entonces eso permite que sin olvidar el pasado se mire hacia el futuro. Entonces lógicamente ellos llevan un variado de todo un poco pero son organizaciones que buscan el futuro entonces en su denunciado también lo hacen. Entonces tienen una misión, una visión que los proyecta hacia el futuro.

**Question 11: Do U.S. American managers have a monochronic time orientation?**

**A:** En las organizaciones de desarrollo no ocurre así tan tajante como lo has mencionado. Si bien cierto que para ellos el tiempo es bien importante y que hay que fijarse metas pero también son conscientes que los proyectos de desarrollo, a veces el trabajar con las personas es más lento de lo que uno cree. Y varía de población a población, porque yo puedo tener dos poblaciones vecinas, y con una de las poblaciones creer de que voy a lograr en el mismo tiempo que logré con la otra de avanzar lo mismo, no es tan así. Hay barreras que son, muchas veces hasta inclusive de idiomas que no permiten de que eso se logre de esa forma. Entonces los proyectos si uno trabaja en una organización de desarrollo no se da tan como este...es lo que se cree que podría ser un empleado o una persona en otra institución de empresa privada o pública. Yo creo que no es tan tajante como lo ha mencionado usted.

**Q:** ¿Y por lo menos en cuestión de las fechas límites de propuestas y de fechas límites de cuando tiene que estar las cosas del proyecto?

**A:** Se marcan las fechas pero como diría se logra entender porque también no se cumple. No se cumplió pues ahí ya cae el culpable. Es más flexible la situación, yo creo en proyectos de desarrollo.

**Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?**

**A:** Yo permanentemente iba a la oficina internacional. Si porque en el proyecto que yo trabajé, era un proyecto global entonces fui.

**Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?**

**A:** Yo tuve dos momentos, fíjese usted que cuando tuve en la cede el curso que hice lo hice en Inglés entonces tuve la oportunidad ... mi Inglés es más técnico que de conversación, entonces cuando yo me comunicaba al inicio con las personas en Español, pues había como una falta de respeto, pero logré obtener más respeto cuando me empecé a comunicar en Inglés. Para el Americano que no tiene conocimiento de otras lenguas, le es muy difícil entender que otras personas no hablen su lengua. Entonces eso es una barrera que yo creo se tiene y especialmente a los Latinos que nos cuesta tanto aprender el Inglés. Entonces bueno yo lo aprendí, pero bueno era más Inglés técnico, pero bueno me gané respeto gracias a eso.
Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the U.S. American managers?

A: sí yo creo que el idioma es un elemento básico que a veces, bueno necesita un esfuerzo de ambas partes, cuando uno habla un Inglés no tan fluido o cuando la persona no habla un Español no tan fluido también que es lo contrario. Porque no hay cosa como entenderse en su propio idioma, eso es obvio, pero de todas maneras cuando uno tiene por necesidad de trabajo que comunicarse en otra lengua, pues en lo técnico es lo que se debe centrar, especialmente con el trabajo que hacemos en las organizaciones.

Q: Entonces con esa barrera de lenguaje que usted menciona, ¿cómo hacían cuando tenían que entregar propuestas por ejemplo?

A: Bueno en ese caso, yo no tenía dificultad, porque la encargada era mi jefa Americana y ella era la que hacia toda la traducción. Con ella trabajábamos en la parte en Español y ella hacía la traducción en Inglés de la propuesta. Entonces se facilita cuando tenemos una persona que habla Inglés en la oficina nacional. Un poco por el hecho también…mira lo que pasa uno puede ir y estar en Argentina y pues el Argentino habla Español pero habla o muy rápido o con muchos modismos y entonces muy difícilmente se le va a entender. Lo mismo ocurre en los Estados Unidos. Hay personas que te hablan como si tuvieran algo en la boca, me pasó cuando estuve en un país Europeo que habla Inglés, pues donde tuve que repetir 5 veces para comprar un pollo me recuerdo. El acento de ellos es totalmente diferente entonces, difiere de persona a persona, ahora lo que yo digo también es que difieren como se pronuncian las palabras en uno o en otro lugar.

Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?

A: Yo diría de que afecta en sentido positivo porque reitero, nuestra cultura no está centrada tanto en resultados, en cambio la cultura Americana sí y eso evidentemente que nos hace que mezclamos los resultados pero tomando en cuenta la relaciones humanas que es importante para nosotros. Y reitero yo creo que es bueno para nosotros el tener que es una oportunidad de trabajar con personas que provienen de los Estados Unidos.

Interview 8: May 8th, 2008

Question 1: What traits do U.S. American managers share?

A: Sí en general yo creo que la mayoría de las características describen muy bien a la cultura Estadounidense entre las que yo estaría de acuerdo digamos y he podido observar algunas características serían que bueno los Americanos en general son metódicos, y ordenados, diría que trabajan mejor con una sola actividad, tienen un alto respeto por horarios, se guían por hechos objetivos es decir para ellos pues no tienen mucho peso problemas o situaciones subjetivas. No son muy emotivos, hasta ahí estaría de acuerdo con esa descripción. Ahora las características en las que creo que mas bien la cultura Estadounidense es mas bien opuesta es en no son muy introvertidos, mas bien son bastantes entradores, son impacientes y yo diría que no son callados, entonces esa es mi perspectiva. Estas características impactan…puede ser que al momento de definir un proyecto por ejemplo de presentar a una propuesta, las propuestas están muy enfocadas a asuntos muy concretos, entonces esa parte de la cultura se orienta hacia cosas muy precisas, por ejemplo metas, cifras, resultados entonces la implicación narrativa o una justificación menos objetiva ya tiene menos valor al momento de evaluar una propuesta, tiene menos peso. Entonces los Latinoamericanos específicamente tenemos un pensamiento más
fragmentado, tenemos más dificultad para llegar a asuntos más concretos y nuestras explicaciones a veces no son tan directas. Entonces eso puede generar conflictos en los procesos de desarrollo, por ejemplo en el escribir una propuesta al momento de aceptar una propuesta, entonces pueden crearse estos conflictos. Entonces en el momento de escribir las propuestas siempre nos toca cambiar y acortar cosas. Con seguridad de siempre de que por lo menos tenemos que acortar, como precisar más los resultados, etc. Eso ocurre muchas veces también en la elaboración de informes y en la preparación de reportes, somos demasiados amplios, como que demasiado... no concretizamos las cosas. Eso puede crear un conflicto entre ambos modos de interpretar las cosas.

**Question 2: Do U.S. American managers have a low-context culture?**

**A:** Sí yo creo que el estilo de comunicación está muy enfocado básicamente en el lenguaje verbal, no se presta mucha atención a otro tipo de lenguaje. En otras culturas tanto la cultura Latinoamericana que no es una excepción que somos muy atentos a muchos lenguajes dependiendo de grupos culturales al interior. Hay otros grupos culturales por ejemplo que dan mucha valoración al lenguaje corporal. Pienso que puede influirse o puede crearse disrupción en la comunicación si se observan otros códigos o lenguajes; manifestaciones de otros códigos o lenguajes que no sean verbal. Desde la parte por ejemplo, una persona Americana que esté haciendo gestos y que puede, esa persona no tiene una conciencia de que ese lenguaje no verbal está generando o puede dar una generación de interpretación diferente. Puede ser falta de respeto, osea ellos no tienen atención a esos otros códigos no verbales, y le puedo dar un ejemplo, por lo menos maneras de saludar, o de iniciar una reunión, etc. Muchas veces yo he tenido en Estados Unidos algunos conflictos por ejemplo de acercamientos y eso puede dar un mensaje diferente entre las partes. Entonces ellos tienen digamos una forma de saludar muy formal. En otro tipo de culturas hay formas de saludar que son un poco mas emotivas. Puede crear un alejamiento o una falta de confianza en el momento que se está generando una relación.

**Q:** Entonces usted dice que desde el momento en que se saluda se puede establecer esa relación de cómo si reciben bien el saludo de uno ¿o no?

**A:** Así es, en otras culturas por ejemplo, nosotros necesitamos un tiempo de acercamiento y creación de confianza antes de ir directamente a la comunicación verbal sobre el asunto específico que se va a tratar, no entramos directamente a discutir el asunto. Osea podemos hablar de otras cosas un poco mas irrelevantes digamos. Bueno yo en mis relaciones de trabajo he visto que algunos ejecutivos jóvenes por ejemplo, salen de ciertas reuniones sin despedirse, entonces eso como que deja una sensación de irrespeto y entendiendo la cultura Americana, eso no es ningún irrespeto dentro de esa cultura.

**Q:** Pero entonces esto es percibido por usted y por sus colegas como una falta de respeto

**A:** Así es, exacto. Y bueno ellos no se dan cuenta, ellos no toman en cuenta esa comunicación no verbal. Ellos solo ponen atención a su comunicación verbal pero no están poniendo atención a su comunicación no verbal en este caso, por ejemplo, del dejar una reunión abruptamente es una cosa de comunicación no verbal.

**Question 3: What is the communication pattern of U.S. American managers?**

**A:** Sí es muy notorio y bueno en algunos casos es muy profesional. Cuando están tratando asuntos profesionales ellos nunca mezclan con ningún tema ni familiar ni de diversión ni de ningún otro asunto no relacionado. Entonces están discutiendo algún asunto profesional y tienen
todos los indicadores precisos sobre lo que quieren hablar. Si por ejemplo uno de estos indicadores ha tenido mal desempeño, para ellos no tiene valor las justificaciones que se puedan dar adicionales al hecho en sí, entonces como que hay un aislamiento entre la causa y el resultado. Ellos están mas enfocados al resultado y es eso lo que le interesa y no les interesa mucho porque no se ha llegado a eso.

**Q:** Entonces en cierta forma usted dice que no se dan cuenta del esfuerzo que fue en tratar de logarlo?

**A:** Bueno tienen una manera de cómo que no les gusta analizar muy profundamente causas negativas porque algo no se ha cumplido. Es su cultura así está muy orientada a premiar logros.

**Question 4: What is the meeting style of U.S. American managers?**

**A:** Sí es también muy obvio. Generalmente en las reuniones se levantan actas muy concretas, muy enfocadas en las decisiones, no tanto como en el debate mismo. Las agendas son muy organizadas, se respetan mucho lo que está agendado e incluso en algunas ocasiones he visto que temas adicionales que han salido espontáneamente de la reunión, ellos han evitado discutir o debatir temas adicionales porque no estaban agendados entonces como que rompían toda su planificación anterior, seguramente tenían otras actividades posteriores y etc. En algunos casos, estos otros temas pueden ser importantes pero ellos como que respetan muchísimo lo que se ha puesto con anticipación.

**Q:** Entonces usted cree que en ese caso no se da paso a la innovación o a la creación de ideas o de puntos que puedan ser añadidos a la discusión, como que no hay casi libertad?

**A:** Ese es el peligro digamos de guardar una cierta creatividad es verdad de que puede haber una mayor productividad digamos con lo agendado son más eficientes en ese sentido, esa es la parte positiva. La parte negativa es que cualquier cosa que sea tan inflexible siempre quita lugar a la creatividad.

**Question 5: Do U.S. American managers have a low-power distance culture?**

**A:** Sí creo que eso es verdad. Por lo menos teóricamente se asume de que la igualdad es muy importante. En el aspecto práctico también digamos he visto esto. Se nota por ejemplo en el nivel…cuando un supervisor está trabajando con un supervisado hay una interacción más horizontal y es muy revelador el hecho por ejemplo de que una persona que esté en un nivel inferior hablando con su jefe, con su supervisor, etc. Tiene como más competencias para defender su punto de vista, y no tiene como que no se deja llevar por simplemente por su nivel de acatar o de guardar silencio, o acatamiento, sobre los puntos de vista que están debatiendo. En realidad no existe por ejemplo: el jefe siempre tiene la razón. En nuestra cultura este slongan es muy fuerte. Una persona que está en un nivel inferior no siempre está dispuesta a o dispuesto a defender a un nivel horizontal sus posiciones, entonces esta parte por ejemplo de la cultura Norteamericana me parece muy bueno porque evita el abuso del poder.

**Question 6: Do U.S. American managers have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture?**

**A:** Bueno es absolutamente cierto de que los Americanos viven en entornos de mayor estabilidad, estos entornos les dan mayores certidumbres digamos, por lo menos en ciertos planos como el plano económico el plano social, estos elementos son importantes para la toma de riesgos, entonces la gente Americana está acostumbrada a analizar ese nivel de riesgos y tiene
bases mas firmes y información también mas a la mano. Por lo tanto hace sentido una planificación mas organizada, y el establecimiento de reglas de mas largo plazo que alas se pueden seguir. En sociedades con mayores niveles de incertidumbre como las latinoamericanas la gente a aprendido a vivir osea del…osea la incertidumbre es ya parte de la cotidianidad. Entonces como que las decisiones son mas cambiantes, digamos que las reglas pueden ser mas flexibles porque estos niveles de certezas sobre la vida son mas vulnerables.

**Q:** ¿Y ese caso cómo usted cree que los estadounidenses manejan este aspecto en respecto a los proyectos?

**A:** Lo que yo he visto que sea cierto en los últimos tiempo de que se ha insistido en una cultura de tomar en cuenta o planificar escenarios de salida, que va a pasar en este escenario y cuales van a ser mis respuestas. Tengo que tener debajo de la manga un plan B para responder a determinada situaciones entonces nosotros los Bolivianos a eso nunca estábamos acostumbrados a trabajar de esa forma, estableciendo escenarios para cada momento entonces ahora personas que trabajamos con apoyo Americano tenemos que asimilar esa cultura de constantemente estarnos imaginando de ¿qué pasaría? ¿cómo responderíamos a esto? ¿cómo respondemos a lo otro? Hacer como una planificación mas formal y mandárselo a ellos. Nosotros lo hacemos mas que todo digamos para cumplir con requerimientos, porque no lo hacemos, no es parte de nuestro diario vivir. Y además sabemos de que podemos hacer una planificación de escenario A, B, C que en un determinado momento en realidad igual no va a servir en el país. Entonces estamos acostumbrados a vivir periodos de mas corto tiempo, respondiendo mas espontáneamente, mas que con planificaciones muy anticipadas. A veces no sentimos de que estamos perdiendo tiempo haciendo estos planes. En cierta forma es como que tenemos que estar lideando con los conflictos de día a día y a parte tenemos que estar planificando cosas teóricas que no sabemos si se van a cumplir o no.

**Q:** ¿Y que porcentaje de tiempo usted cree que se pierde haciendo esto?

**A:** Bueno dependiendo de a quien se responde. Me imagino que hay apoyos etc. Que piden esas planificaciones con un mayor nivel de certeza, planificaciones mas profundas, etc. Y otros que deben pedir cosas mas ligeras. Yo pienso que considerando la cultural Americana que es muy orientada a cosas mas precisas, se tendrá que hacer una planificación con mas detalle.

**Question 7 and 8: Do U.S. American managers have an individualistic and a vertical individualistic culture?**

**A:** La parte de manejo del individuo versus las metas colectivas ¿no? Bueno yo creo de que hay una cierta que se extrapola esa característica por ejemplo de aspiraciones y planes personales en primer lugar y que por eso siempre hay tanta valoración por la competitividad. Para lograr esas aspiraciones personales hay que considerar que los Americanos no tienen que hacer tantos esfuerzos colectivos. Los esfuerzos colectivos no son de gran envergadura osea ello si han con sus esfuerzos individuales pueden lograr estas cosas y en la parte de los proyectos por ejemplo toman muchísima atención a los esfuerzos que esté haciendo la misma organización. Entonces esto en algunos casos puede no permitir el apalancamiento de esfuerzos adicionales que estén haciendo otras organizaciones entonces en este sentido por ejemplo se tiene muchísimo temor de lograr alianzas con otras organizaciones, especialmente con organizaciones que no sean Americanas, o hacer alianzas con grupos locales o con instituciones del estado, etc. porque se piensa que los costos van a ser mas alto que los beneficios.

**Q:** Lo que dice es muy interesante ya que usualmente cuando se hacen alianzas los costos bajan porque los fondos se unen, etc. Pero ¿usted dice que ellos no lo ven así?
A: Yo he visto que en algunos casos esa lógica se maneja, de apalancar recursos, de enriquecer experiencias, etc. la manejan cuando son organizaciones que tienen ese mismo, esa misma visión cultural, organizaciones Americanas por ejemplo. Pero por ejemplo no se involucra a una organización del estado porque una organización del estado es burocrática, porque puede ser corrupta, etc. Entonces en ese caso si se ve como individualista como que ellos tienen una mayor valoración por lo suyo y una menor valoración por lo otro. Y en algunos casos puede ser verdad, osea como que hay organizaciones del estado de toda clase pero no necesariamente todas tienen esas características.

**Question 9: What is the leadership style of U.S. American managers?**

A: Sí creo que he visto varias de esas características en algunas personas Americanas que he tenido como supervisores o como colegas de trabajo en diferentes experiencias. Y creo que es una excelente práctica para crear competencias y capacidades y que da la oportunidad de desconcentrar digamos todas estas habilidades digamos en mano de un solo líder, como que rompe con la dependencia. Entonces me parecen unos excelentes atributos.

Q: Bueno y por lo menos con el aspecto de que los supervisores le dan la oportunidad y la libertad a los Bolivianos de que manejen su propio trabajo, ¿usted cómo cree que los Bolivianos ven esto?

A: Bueno este creo que nosotros en general estoy hablando no compartimos mucho esta práctica y es una pena. Como que dependemos mucho de una orientación un poco más paternalista, más cercana, y muchas veces eso lo que hace es crear una dependencia muy fuerte. Todo el tiempo nosotros estamos esperando ese control, como que nos digan que hacer. No ponemos atención a muchos detalles, no nos responsabilizamos por nuestro trabajo, por nuestro role, porque siempre esperamos que haya alguien arriba que esté cuidando de los detalles, que se responsabilice. Entonces muchas veces cuando sucede que se establece una relación digamos de estas características donde la persona que está arriba confía en nosotros y nos da las habilidades para hacer eso, a veces se cometen errores, y a veces errores muy graves. Por esta cultura de esperar que otros nos controlen. Bueno tengo ejemplos específicos en mi trabajo. Yo trabajo en una institución que tenemos muchas agencias, es difícil controlar desde una oficina centralizada por la distancia y por el tamaño de la organización. Entonces cuando se da, por decir, a los gerentes regionales la autoridad para asumir esa responsabilidad, ellos están esperando que desde el nivel centralizado todo el tiempo los estemos vigilando y cuando en algún momento ocurre un error y se llama la atención por este error ellos dicen: pero ustedes no han revisado mi trabajo. Y entonces no es responsabilidad digamos nuestro realizar el trabajo, sino recibir ya los resultados, pero ellos asumen que nuestra responsabilidad es revisarlo. Esto viene desde la cultura Latina, digamos, tenemos esos prejuicios que me imagino vienen desde nuestra conformación colonial que siempre hemos estado supeditados a …

**Question 10: Do U.S. American managers have a short-time orientation?**

A: Bueno yo los veo particularmente muy orientados hacia el futuro. Porque ellos tienen una valoración muy fuerte por todo lo que es tecnología, las cosas practicas, la practicidad. Eso no es necesariamente es negativo, por ejemplo uno de los elementos de dar la cara, de crear una reputación, es su constante reputación por la transparencia. La transparencia, la rendición de cuentas, etc. Hay muchos incentivos en la cultura Americana que premia una transparencia y castiga lo opuesto. Bueno y este aspecto puede crear un nivel de descoordinación entre las partes
en el sentido de que se puede percibir una determinada intervención como una imposición y como nosotros somos muy cuidadoso de lo que dicen los supervisores, de lo que dicen los extranjeros, etc. Muchas veces la gente acepta calladamente pero después esa disatisfacción explota en otras formas de manifestaciones.

**Q:** Si porque por lo menos, con respecto a esta pregunta estaba pensando en los beneficiarios de los proyectos, supongamos que son comunidades, que son respetuosas de las tradiciones y de todo eso y si es algún proyecto que está enfocado en algo del futuro que en realidad no les beneficia pues debe ser un poco difícil ¿no?

**A:** Por supuesto, así es claro ha habido proyectos en comunidades que sin ir muy lejos no están muy enfocados en el futuro, pero están enfocados en valoración de cosas muy occidentalizadas. Y que por ejemplo el uso de baños con ducha y con todas las comodidades bueno que tenemos todas las personas occidentalizadas, pero que al momento de aplicarse en una comunidad es una perdida de dinero y de tiempo porque los comunarios los hacen pero después no los utilizan o los utilizan para otras cosas.

**Question 11: Do U.S. American managers have a monochronic time orientation?**

**A:** Sí definitivamente. En algunos casos pueden ser características positivas que digamos pueden dar mucha eficiencia y productividad. Por ejemplo, de proyectos donde los recursos son escasos y que tienen que enfocarse en niveles de alta productividad. En otros casos, por ejemplo proyectos mas sociales, este desbalance puede dar conflictos con otro tipo de culturas, donde ellos no tienen un nivel de paciencia para participar en ritos, en celebración de tradiciones, etc. Hay culturas originarias donde no se puede por ejemplo empezar un proyecto si no se hace una chaya, o una celebración o un agradecimiento a cualquier delegado, etc. Entonces para ellos eso es totalmente improductivo, eso de una racionalidad occidental lógica, entonces eso no tiene absolutamente valor. Pero para una cultura mas tradicional esto es un elemento con valor muy alto. Esto puede lugar a conflictos porque la cultura que está manifestando disatisfacción por esos ritos etc. esas perdidas de tiempo, puede dar lugar a un sentido de irrespeto por otra cultura. Otra vez se valoran ciertas cosas y se desvalorizan otras.

**Q:** Y ¿cómo este aspecto del tiempo afecta cuando hay fechas límites para las propuestas o para los proyectos?

**A:** Bueno ahí no se como puede afectarse en el caso de propuestas, yo creo que es mas en la relación mas practica ¿no? De visitar una comunidad, de hacer un rito, etc. Pero bueno cuando se trata de la percepción inter-temporal es muy diferente. Por ejemplo las comunidades rurales Bolivianas aquí, no perciben ni distancias, ni tiempos, son percibidas de la misma manera. Entonces todavía algunas comunidades rurales tienen percepciones de tiempo que están basadas en eventos que ocurren durante el año, por ejemplo la cosecha, la siembra. Ellos utilizan su percepción del tiempo alrededor de eventos no perciben digamos en el Mes de Agosto, supongamos el 28 de Agosto.

**Q:** ¿Y en el caso del equipo de su organización que tiene que escribir las propuestas para los proyectos?

**A:** Bueno generalmente, las propuestas las escriben personas mas occidentalizadas, que toman mas en cuenta digamos la percepción temporal mas Americana. Al momento de aplicar las propuestas es el problema, porque quienes aplican las propuestas son los grupos que tienen esta otra percepción.
Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?

A: Bueno este yo no tengo ningún problema porque en la oficina de Estados Unidos trabajan gente que tiene un contacto muy cercano con Latinoamérica. Conocen nuestra cultura y yo creo que han aprendido a balancear. Conocen cuales son nuestros aspectos mas críticos y existe un balance, y desde luego yo también conozco la cultura Americana y no me siento ofendida o no me siento muy afectada cuando se produce un hecho que no va con mi cultura, puedo entender que son diferencias culturales. Utilizamos todos los medios el email, teléfono, Skype, teleconferencias.

Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?

A: Si es fácil comunicarme con ellos, nunca he tenido problemas. Yo creo que hay un entendimiento por los dos lados, un entendimiento y un respeto de un nivel muy elevado y facilita la comunicación.

Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the U.S. American managers?

A: Si cuando una persona no tiene entendimiento del otro idioma por supuesto que hay barreras que en algunos casos pueden hacerse insuperables. En mi caso particular yo puedo entender Inglés y hablarlo razonablemente entonces creo que no tenemos problemas para eso y hay muchas personas de la oficina de Estados Unidos que también hablan Español.

Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?

A: Bueno yo creo que en algunos casos cuando no se han considerado las diferencias culturales y no ha habido esfuerzos desde la parte del Norte para entender la cultura local, digamos que la implementación o desde la concepción de proyectos han sido un total fracaso. Una perdida de dinero y esfuerzo y además una perdida de confianza digamos desde las partes involucradas, entonces los Americanos pierden confianza en las competencias y capacidades de los Bolivianos para hacer los proyectos y los Bolivianos pierden confianza también en ciertas capacidades y competencias que creen que son superiores en los Americanos para implementar un proyecto. Entonces el entendimiento un acercamiento mas profundo previo puede evitar estas perdidas. Esta es mi perspectiva particular cuando funcionarios de otras culturas quieren involucrarse en desarrollar proyectos tiene que ellos tener un primer acercamiento de entender a la cultura. Y además en muchas cosas existen lógicas diferentes, existen percepciones de la vida diferente, percepciones de la temporalidad diferentes entonces nosotros no podemos asumir siempre que lo que nosotros pensamos que es desarrollo significa lo mismo para una comunidad que es muy tradicional. Entonces hay que lograr ciertos acercamientos y establecer ciertos equilibrios.

Q: ¿Entonces por ejemplo que porcentaje de las contrapartes estadounidenses usted cree que tienen este entendimiento?

A: Digamos que he encontrado en mi experiencia particular diría que he encontrado un grupo ligeramente mayor de gente que entendía. Digamos un 60% - 40%.
Interview 9: May 13th, 2008

Question 1: What traits do U.S. American managers share?

A: Yo creo que si en general es una percepción que tenemos acerca de los Estadounidenses, que son personas que ordenadas, cuando tienen que tratar ciertos temas y tienen un orden siguen exactamente el orden. También tienen una visión bien puntual de las cosas osea bien puntuales. Sí como que mantienen un orden. Introvertidos no creo, yo creo que ellos son personas que no son introvertidas. Yo creo que la cultura impacta. Porque la cultura impacta en la forma de hacer las cosas. En las representaciones como de las cosas. Yo creo que por ejemplo, en la metodología de planificación y de presentación de propuestas, reflejan la cultura Estadounidense. En cuanto a la forma en la que uno tiene que presentar las propuestas, bien sistemático, concreto también.

Q: Y en ese sentido, por lo menos, usted cree que siempre hay que cambiar la forma en que se escriben las propuestas al estilo de la cultura de ellos?

A: Yo creo que sí porque cada instrumento que uno usa es como una representación de la cultura entonces nosotroos por ejemplo para presentar una propuesta tenemos que hablar como en el lenguaje de la cultura a la que estamos, a las que estamos intercambiando.

Question 2: Do U.S. American managers have a low-context culture?

A: Yo creo que sí porque el lenguaje yo creo que al mismo tiempo que es la expresión de cultura, también construye hasta es eminente a la construcción de la persona. Yo creo que el lenguaje influye mucho también en cómo te desarollas. Entonces lo que yo veo en la diferencia en el lenguaje estadounidense es que es concreto, como que por sí mismo, significa algo. También en el Español hay palabras que se utilizan y que significan más relación con su entorno o con el contexto.

Q: ¿Osea que hay más cosas implícitas?

A: Sí en cambio el Inglés, es más explícito entonces el efecto que se ve cuando se están desarrollando las propuestas o proyectos es en el lenguaje. Porque nosotros a veces queremos expresar una idea y tenemos como que, me parece que como las cosas que quisieras decir se simplifican al traducirlas al Inglés.

Question 3: What is the communication pattern of U.S. American managers?

A: Yo creo que sí son directos y como su lenguaje también es directo y concreto pues sí te dicen de una manera concreta. También se ve en el intercambio, cuando nosotros usamos nuestro lenguaje para expresarnos también, como que en realidad no es una comunicación de dos direcciones sino de una dirección. Nosotros les entendemos, pero creo que a veces no nos entienden. Osea no es igual. Cuando se están desarrollando los proyectos influye en la redacción también. Cómo se interpreta lo que nosotros queremos expresar. Pero por lo menos yo creo que hay una parte que ayuda porque al tener que usar un lenguaje concreto, pues nos ayuda a poner también las cosas que queremos hacer de una manera más explícita. Entonces nos favorece. Cuando se están ejecutando los proyectos, en términos, por ejemplo algo que le gusta en la presentación de propuestas a USDA es que uno puede poner líneas generales y tu puedes adaptarlo, pones al detalle, paso por paso lo que tenemos que hacer entonces cuando estamos ya aplicando a los beneficiarios desarrollamos ya nuestros pasos, nuestras metodologías ya pues en
función a la cultura de los beneficiarios. Claro como Bolivia es multicultural no podemos aplicar de una misma manera.

Question 4: What is the meeting style of U.S. American managers?

A: Sí yo creo que sí. Siempre hay un orden, que puntos vamos a discutir, discutimos y llegamos a conclusiones y ya.
Q: ¿Entonces si se da espacio a otras ideas que no estén en la orden del día o no?
A: Yo creo que dependiendo del tipo de reunión. Hay reuniones en donde sí se da lugar a que se discutan otros puntos ¿no? O que no estén incluidas en la reunión, pero generalmente no. Es una orden, y hay que seguir el orden. Ahora que dentro de ese marco sí se promociona la discusión de los puntos creo que también sí.
Q: Y en este caso, ¿cómo es percibido este estilo de reuniones por los Bolivianos en sí?
A: Ya estamos acostumbrados. Es igual, en eso no creo que sea difiera mucho la cultura. Sí en Bolivia se da un espacio para mayor flexibilidad en discusión, en agregar puntos adicionales, y todo eso.

Question 5: Do U.S. American managers have a low-power distance culture?

A: Yo en realidad creo que hay relaciones de poder. Yo veo que se nota mucho la distancia. Por lo menos dos distancias, por ejemplo entre el que financia y está financiado, hay una distancia y hay una relación de poder y jerarquía no creo que hay igualdad.
Q: Y en cuestión por lo menos de los Estadounidenses que trabajan con la misma organización, osea por lo menos las contrapartes estadounidenses que trabajan en estos proyectos también…
A: Yo creo que ahí depende mucho la distancia del financiador. Por lo menos USDA, me parece una institución bien flexible. Osea te permite, osea te da lineamientos pero dentro de esos lineamientos puedes moverte con la aptitud, entonces hay instancias, por lo menos USAID, es mas vertical, inclusive últimamente hasta te ha dictado exactamente hasta los contenidos de los mensajes que tienes que dar, y no creo que sea si eres Estadounidense o no sino de la ideología de la institución ya donde trabajan.
Q: Entonces por lo menos en el caso de las contrapartes estadounidenses de su propia organización los cuales trabajan con ustedes muy cercanos, ¿cómo usted cree que se ve este aspecto?
A: Nuestro equipo de los Estados Unidos yo creo que tiene bastante amplitud, no vemos esa relación vertical osea son más horizontal, de más amplitud de mas apoyo, interacción, yo creo que sí, no se ve esa relación vertical con ellos.

Question 6: Do U.S. American managers have a low-uncertainty avoidance culture?

A: Yo creo que mas bien en realidad en la cultura Boliviana es donde se vive mas incertidumbre que en la cultura estadounidense osea el nivel de estabilidad, que gozaban, ahora bueno ya no tanto, yo creo que hace que a veces no se comprendan las inestabilidades que se dan en los países como Bolivia durante la ejecución de los proyectos. Hay cosas que uno no había planificado y que surgen, y de saca los proyectos, de saca las actividades, entonces.
Q: Bueno en ese caso, ¿cómo reaccionan las contrapartes estadounidenses?
A: En ese caso a ver, a veces sí se puede justificar, reorientar las estrategias, algunas contrapartes estadounidenses sí te permiten hacer eso. Entonces te da esa aptitud.
Q: ¿Entonces usted diría que la mayoría o la minoría si da ese espacio para ese tipo de incertidumbres o cambios que puedan ocurrir?
A: Es que por ejemplo ahora con dos fuentes con las que trabajamos, y me parece que USDA es flexible y USAID no flexible, osea USAID de la misión Boliviana.
Q: Y los miembros de su organización que son y están aquí en los Estados Unidos ¿cómo reaccionan a estas incertidumbres?
A: No pues ellos tienen mas amplitud, están bien ubicados en el contexto de cada país, con mas amplitud con relación a lo que pasa, osea, yo creo que como hay ellos trabajan en diferentes partes y con diferentes culturas bueno es como algo aprendido.

Question 7: Do U.S. American managers have an individualistic and a vertical individualistic culture?

A: Sí yo creo que la cultura estadounidense es individualista en diferencia a la cultura Boliviana que nos basamos mas en las interrelaciones y bueno toda el área rural tiene mucho importancia, lo comunitario osea la voluntad, osea hay voluntad individual pero también hay una voluntad colectiva. Entonces ambas se combinan y eso es generalmente en los lugares pequeños, en el área rural, donde hay una relación con la tierra, la producción, en cambio inclusive en Bolivia, en el área urbana es otra visión más individualista se pierden muchas cosas comunitarias. Lo que es una característica de la cultural estadounidense.

B: Y ¿cómo usted cree que esto afecta la preparación de propuesta y el desarrollo de proyectos en Bolivia?
A: Yo creo que se da cuando intercambiamos metodologías, por ejemplo, durante las propuestas a veces adaptamos metodologías que se han desarrollado en los Estados Unidos y que tiene una visión más como del individuo, en cambio en el área rural tiene que combinarse las dos cosas para que la estrategia sea efectiva lo comunitario y lo individual. Entonces puede influir en realidad cuando hay paquetes así bien establecidos de parte de los donantes, de estrategias que tenemos que implementar, si se dan casos en los que influye y tenemos que aplicar otro tipo de visión así a ejemplo del área rural. Pero en el caso de USDA por lo ejemplo es amplio, nosotros hacemos la metodología que seleccionamos, un alineamiento te puedo decir, en cambio USAID, por ejemplo en los proyectos te dan la metodología que también en cierta forma se han elaborado a función de experiencias de instituciones. Entonces si veo que hay mas apertura ahora a usar lo que es mas adaptado al contexto cultural. Entonces en los últimos años si ha cambiado eso un poco y también depende de la institución.

Question 9: What is the leadership style of U.S. American managers?

A: Yo creo que sí. Por ejemplo yo veo, tal vez no hemos podido intercambiar con los empleados de USDA por ejemplo pero sí con nuestra oficina de Estados Unidos vemos eso que cada persona, o cada unidad, tiene sus propias metas, tiene cierto margen de acción, vemos también que se complementan entre ellos, se respetan entre ellos, respetan la competencia, las opiniones. Me parece un buen estilo de liderazgo. Ellos nos dan la libertad de hacer eso, de tomar nuestras propias decisiones, de desarrollar propuestas, y siguiendo el mismo estilo de la oficina internacional. También en la ejecución de los proyectos hay bastante libertad, también confianza en las capacidades de la oficina de Bolivia.
Q: Y ¿usted cree que esto beneficia o dificulta un poco el desarrollo de los trabajos.
A: Yo creo que beneficia porque da lugar a una mayor responsabilidad, ha realizar las cosas con compromiso, con [inaudible]

**Question 10: Do U.S. American managers have a short-time orientation?**

A: Yo creo que sí porque en realidad están surgiendo varias corrientes que se promueve el respeto por las culturas, todo lo de la inter-culturalidad. Yo creo que ellos están más enfocados al futuro, osea que cambios que…pero en un corto tiempo, osea en realidad los proyectos con ahora financier son de corto plazo, y corto plazo tenemos que tratar de hacer varios cambios que a veces no son factibles, que son procesos mas largos, que los cambios, yo creo que se producen en procesos mas largos.

**Question 11: Do U.S. American managers have a monochronic time orientation?**

A: A mi me parece algo bueno. Osea en realidad en Bolivia, por ejemplo un profesional hace de todo porque es desde nuestra educación, la formación en la universidad pues nos forma como a ser aptos para varias cosas, en cambio los estadounidenses son formados para hacer cosas específicas y en las instituciones y en el trabajo ellos hacen algo específico, tiene todo el tiempo para hacer, y yo creo que lo hacen bien. Osea es tan específico y el tiempo tan concreto que lo hacen bien y a profundidad. En cambio en nuestra cultura, tenemos que hacer varias cosas, nuestro trabajo está organizado así para hacer varias cosas, entonces como que no…hasta el tiempo….osea varias cosas que hacer no tienes un tiempo distribuido bien, entonces generalmente el trabajador Boliviano, pues trabaja mas de lo que debería trabajar. Yo creo que el estadounidense trabaja menos horas que un Boliviano. Y yo creo que es cierto que valoran su tiempo pero al mismo tiempo como que eso hace que la hora en la que trabaja sea bien valorado, osea como que eso refleja en el salario que reciben. En cambio por las funciones económicas de Bolivia y todo eso, muchas veces pueden trabajar mucho tiempo mas por la misma cantidad de dinero. Y eso pues refleja también la valoración del tiempo. Allá si la cultura estadounidense esta diciendo, yo gano tanto a la hora, en cambio tu pregunta a un Boliviano cuanto gana a la hora y no sabe, te dice cuanto gana al mes.

Q: ¿Y cómo esta percepción del tiempo afecta a las fechas límites de propuestas y de fases de los proyectos?

A: Yo creo que dan libertad porque en realidad el que diseña el proyecto es Bolivia, entonces nosotros nos establecemos los tiempos, entonces no hay un establecimiento de tipo vertical que te digan eso se termina en tanto tiempo, osea nosotros planificamos y en función a lo que planificamos hacemos el seguimiento, lo que sí fijan es la fecha de los informes, por ejemplo USDA que fija cada 6 meses y me parece un buen tiempo, y para ese tiempo me parece bien presentar informes, osea no es demasiado frecuente, hay otros que te piden trimestrales por ejemplo USAID. Pero que es uno mismo el que también se fija los tiempos. Pero los informes no, dependiendo de cada institución, de cada característica te piden y yo creo que hay que cumplirla.

Q: ¿Y en el caso de fechas límites para propuestas?

A: A mi me parece bien en que fechas tienes que presentar.
Question 12: How do you usually communicate with the international office?
A: Por correo electrónico y una vez al mes nos comunicamos por teléfono, con una conferencia Telefónica y todo en Español

Question 13: How do you find communicating with the international office: easy or challenging?
A: Me parece fácil bien accesible.

Question 14: Is there a language barrier with the U.S. American managers?
A: No creo porque allá la mayoría sabe Español y de Bolivia varias personas saben Inglés o si tenemos conocimiento, osea porque a veces nos escriben en Inglés entonces podemos contestar. Y a mi por lo menos me escriben en Inglés y yo contesto en Español. Y también percibo en varios de mis compañeros eso, osea que podemos leer una carta en Inglés y responder en Español y no dicen nada, así como que no tienen que responder en Español ni nada.
Q: Y por lo menos en si en general en lo que es la ejecución y preparación de propuestas, ¿qué idioma utilizan y cómo eso juega un papel?
A: Generalmente en Bolivia preparamos en Español las propuestas y los informes sin traducirlos osea no tenemos problemas en eso. Y contamos con el apoyo de un traductor.

Question 15: What is the overall impact of these cultural differences?
A: Yo creo que afecta en el hecho que son dos culturas que se están comunicando, osea realmente al tener un contacto, tenemos una influencia también en ambas direcciones. Cuando los formatos y las metodologías del donante están bien establecidos, nosotros tenemos que adaptarnos a esa forma. Entonces es como que tenemos que tomar lo nuestro como que traducirlo, sin tratar de perder la esencia, y yo creo que si direcciona de alguna manera, algunas metodologías también direccionan las estrategias Aunque en este tiempo no es eso determinante osea a uno no le imponen cosas, hay cierta libertad para desarrollar los proyectos, hacer innovaciones. Yo no veo tanto como algo estrictamente negativo o que influye muy vertical durante la preparación o ejecución de los proyectos.
Q: Usted dice que ustedes están bien acostumbrados y son flexibles al estilo de los estadounidenses, pero usted cree que ellos son igual de flexibles con ustedes?
A: Yo creo que sí, osea como te decía más antes hay instancias que te permiten a ti delimitar tu metodología la orientación de tu proyecto. En el caso de USDA como te digo que es bien amplia, que puedes tener mucho margen para innovar, para desarrollar en tu estrategia para ir reorientando estrategias durante la implementación. La fundación Kellogg’s por ejemplo es bien flexible que permite que durante los procesos, tu pruebes algo y digas a no funciona, entonces cambies. Entonces sí, durante la implementación no veo algo vertical, algo cerrado…no.
LIST OF REFERENCES


Karine Elizabeth Peña Ochoa was born in Táchira, Venezuela, in 1982, to Orlando and Elizabeth Peña. She attended Mary Help of Christians Academy until she immigrated with her family to the United States of America in 1996. In 2000, she graduated with honors from Coral Springs High School, Florida. She started her undergraduate studies at the University of Florida in 2000. She studied abroad in France during summer 2002. She then received her bachelor’s degree in liberal arts (in French) from the University of Florida in December 2004.

After working for a year as a middle school Spanish teacher at Coral Springs Charter School in Florida, Ms. Peña Ochoa returned to the University of Florida to pursue a master’s degree in mass communication with a specialization in international communication. At the same time, she started working as a graduate hall director (GHD) with the University of Florida’s Department of Housing. From Fall 2006 to Spring 2008 she simultaneously worked and studied around the clock. During summer 2007, she became a recipient of the Coca-Cola World Citizenship Program and did an internship with an international non-government organization in Bolivia. Throughout her academic and professional years, Ms. Peña Ochoa was an active member of different volunteer and community service organizations. As an undergraduate student she co-founded a volunteer organization called HABLA (Hispanic Association for Bilingual Assistance), and as a graduate student she was an active member of Asha for Education–UF Chapter.

In December 2008, Ms. Peña Ochoa graduated with a Master of Arts in Mass Communication with a specialization in international communication from the University of Florida. Her research interests focus on international and intercultural communication, as well as on cultural studies. She hopes to combine her passion for languages, cultures and the international communications field through employment in the near future.