



# WORKING ABROAD

*“Ignore the geology at your peril.”*



**John Burland**  
Civil Engineer



1.  
YOUR PROJECT

Working abroad \_\_\_\_\_



2.  
APPROACHES

Working abroad \_\_\_\_\_



3.  
THE CULTURAL MAZE

Working abroad \_\_\_\_\_



4.  
TIPS

Working abroad \_\_\_\_\_



# 1. YOUR PROJECT

# What is your project?

I'm moving with my partner

I've always wanted to go abroad

My company is being bought

I'm thinking about it

My career is faltering

Why not?

The company is going global

We need new suppliers

It's fashionable

We have a foreign partner

My resume will look better

I lost a bet

I'm fascinated with Japan

My English is too bad

# Clarify your goals



You're not just looking for a degree  
or a line on your resume

- 🤔 Language?
- 🤔 Knowledge?
- 🤔 Seniority?
- 🤔 Personal challenge?
- 🤔 A way out?
- 🤔 Childhood dreams?...



## 2. APPROACHES

# Traps

Distraction

Confusion

Denial

Procrastination

Underestimation

Mistakes

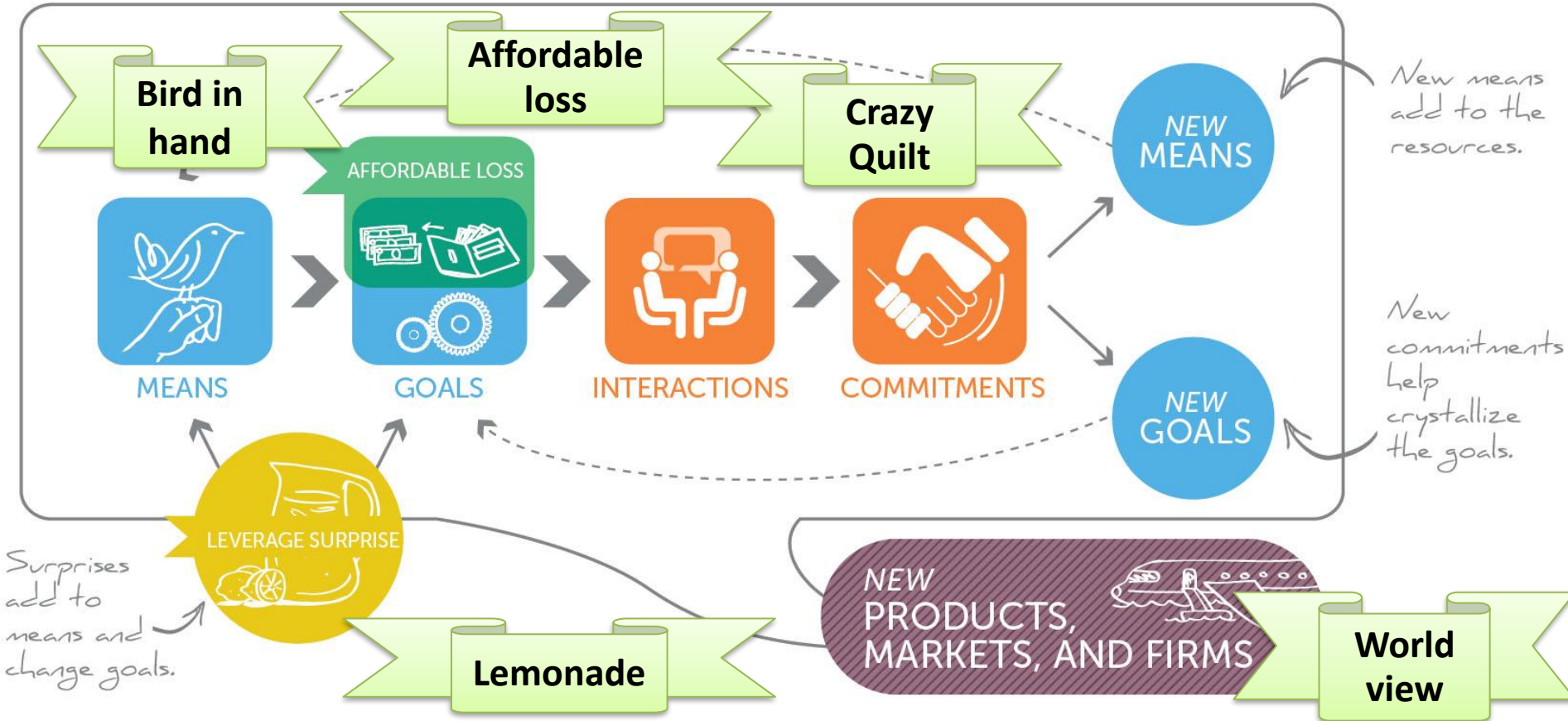


# A difficult environment

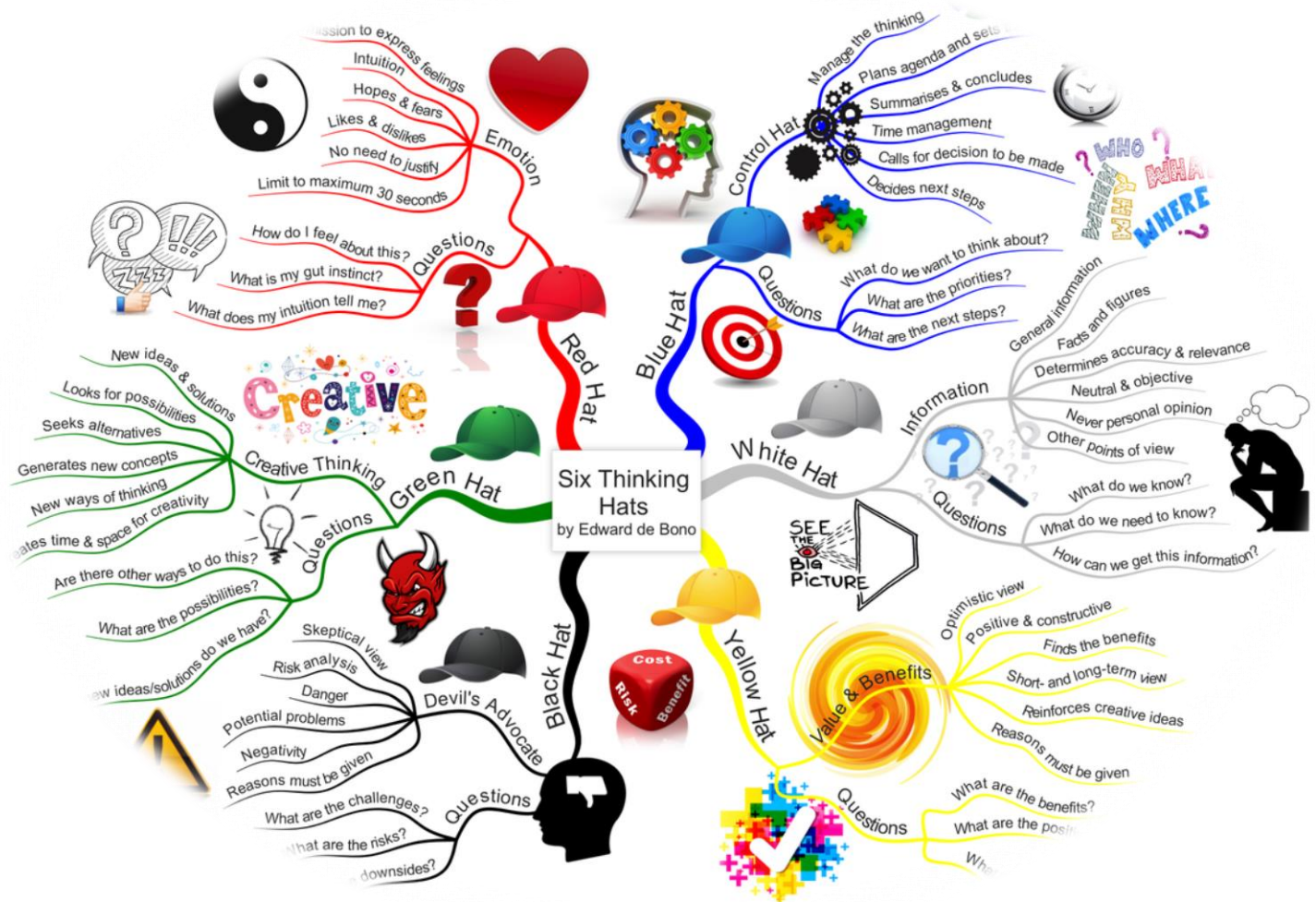
International activities are too complex to be organized “scientifically”

- ❖ Being **well-prepared** and competent is worth more than any plan
- ❖ Flexible, hands-on approaches such as effectuation are advised
- ❖ Trouble and failures are to be expected and accepted

# 5 principles of effectuation



# Visual thinking





### 3. THE CULTURAL MAZE

# The 7 cultural dimensions of Trompenaars



## Universalism

- Rules apply to all situations



## Individualism

- More important to act as an individual



## Neutral

- Keep emotions hidden



## Achievement

- Gaining success from what we achieve



## Specific

- Compartmentalize, things are not linked



## Sequential

- Time is a finite, closely managed resource



## Inner-directed

- We control our environment

VS.



## Particularism

- Rules differ according to circumstances



## Collectivism

- More important to act as group member



## Affective

- Better to show emotions



## Ascription

- Gaining success from who we are



## Diffuse

- Generalize, things are linked



## Synchronic

- Time used flexibly to juggle with events



## Outer-directed

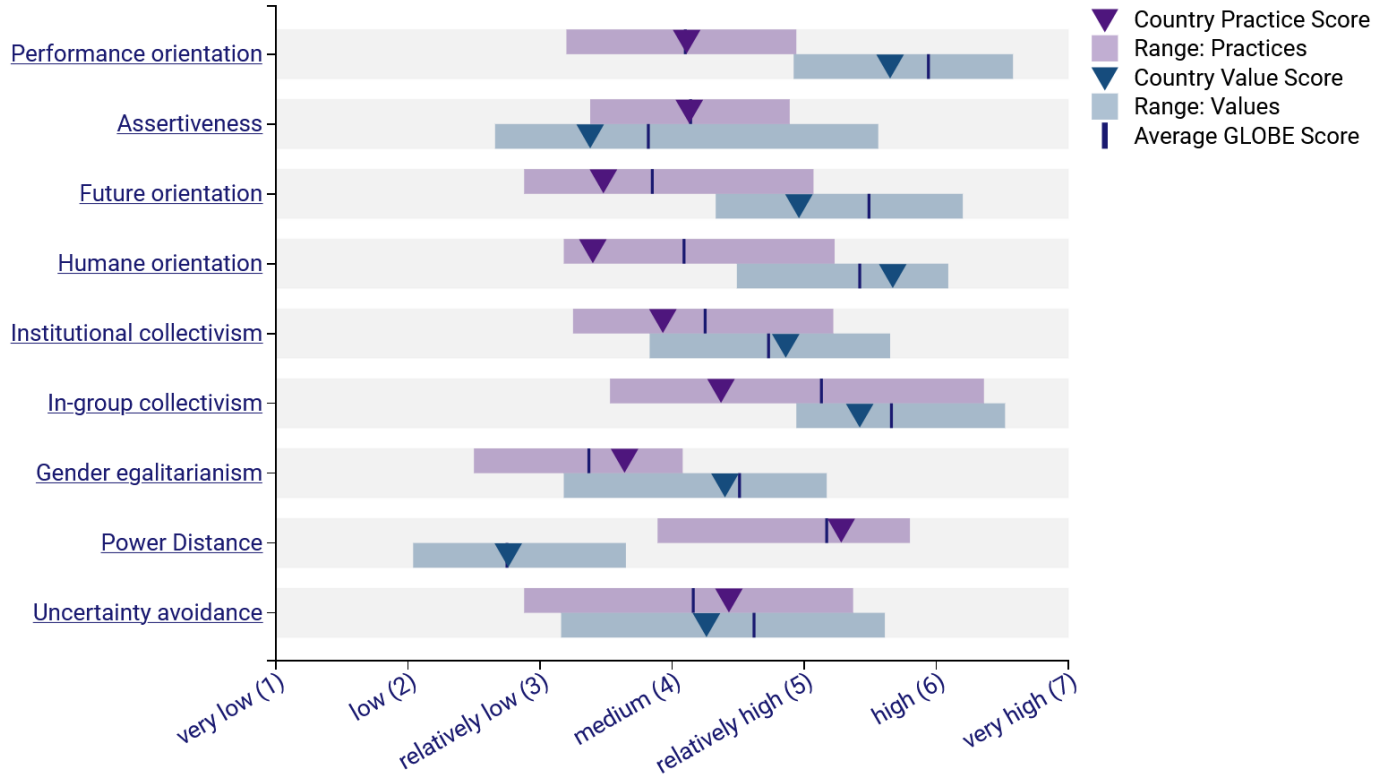
- Our environment controls us

# The 6 cultural dimensions of Hofstede



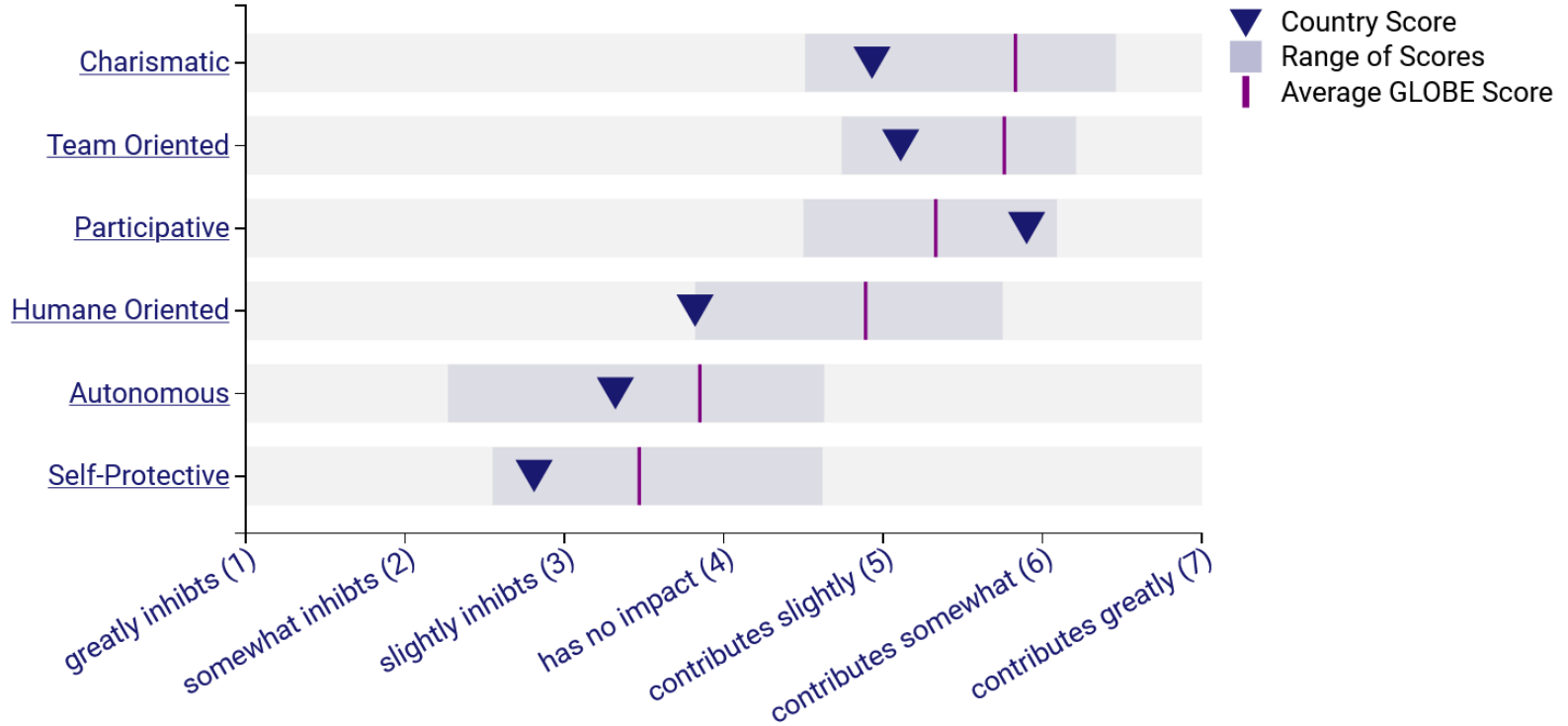
# The 2004 GLOBE study - Cultural practices

Cultural Practices and Values in France



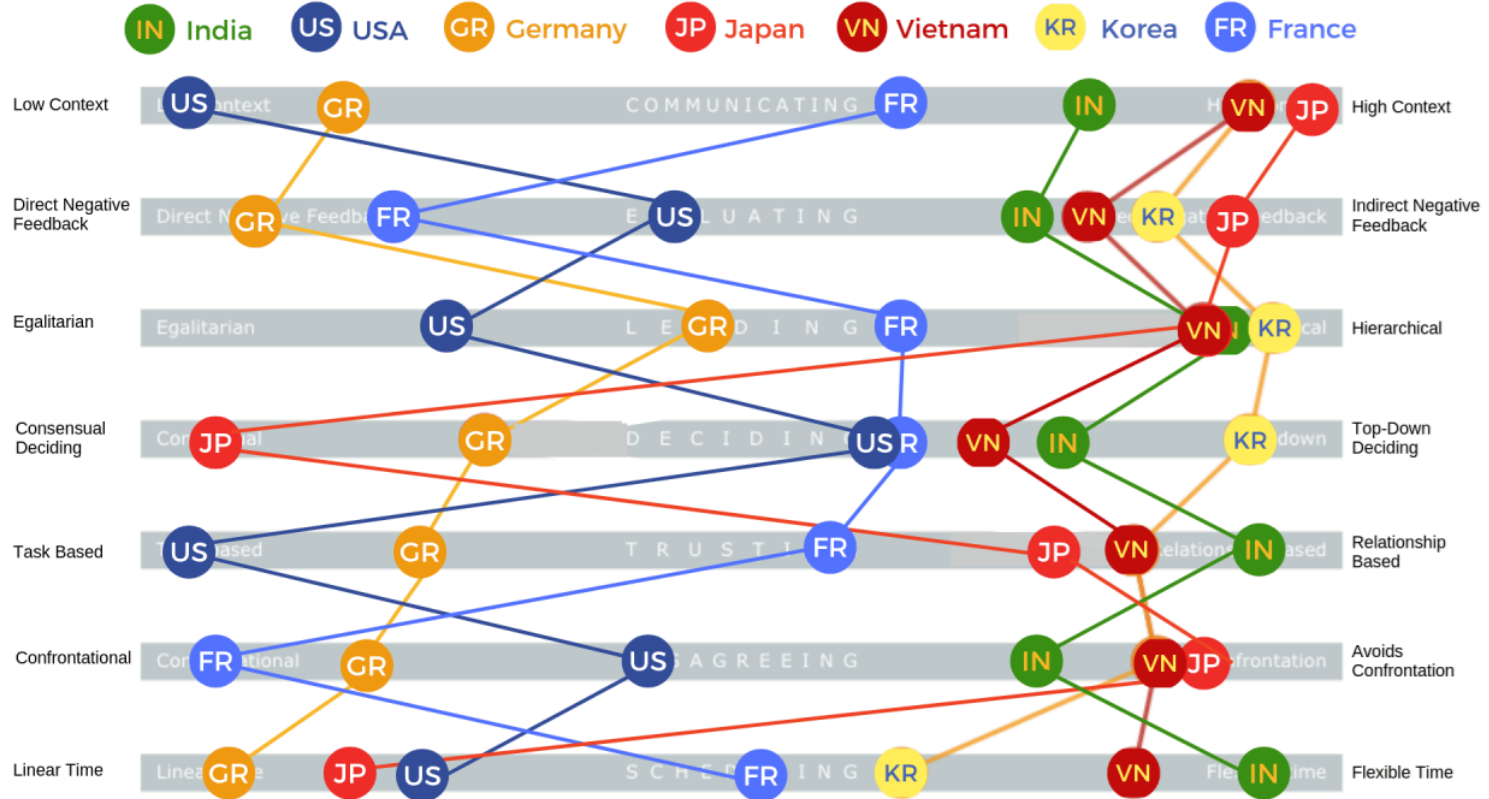
# The 2004 GLOBE study - Leadership

## Leadership Scores for Outstanding Leadership in France





# The 8 cultural dimensions of Erin Meyer



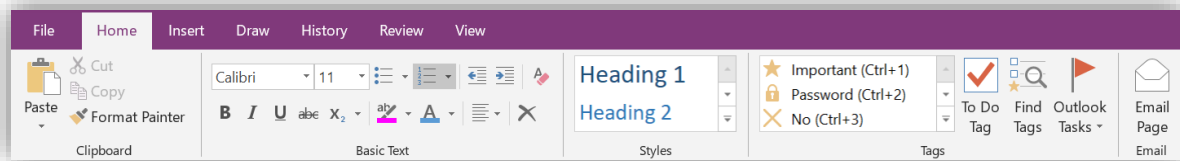
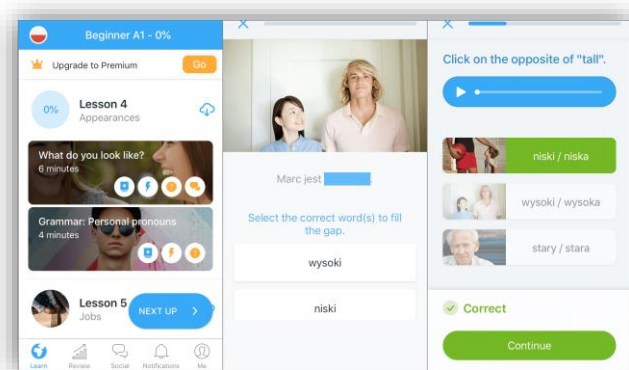


## 4. TIPS

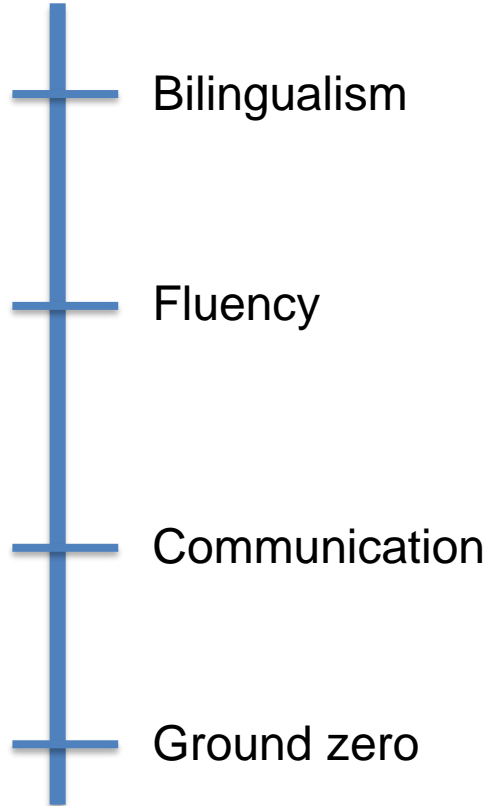
# Learning the language is inescapable

Learning a language today presents no difficulty, you can

- ✓ Use apps and MOOCs all day long
- ✓ Read magazines, books, internet content
- ✓ Connect with speakers locally or anywhere
- ✓ Take any kind of courses
- ✓ Change the language of your phone, computer, car...
- ✓ Travel for short or long stays (even close to home)
- ✓ Join groups, attend events



# Business language works by thresholds



# Confrontation

International activities are not theoretical, they are **concrete**

- The best way to know if you're ready is to **jump**
- You need to meet people, pick up your phone, chat, etc.
- If you are in the place, don't just visit, **engage!** In many ways!



# Network



Building your own international network is **easy**

- You can find people around you or via internet
- There's **a million reasons** to connect with them
- They will help you for **everything**

# Sherpa



If someone knowledgeable  
can introduce you  
to your new place,  
**seize the opportunity**

# Your takeaways



## 1. Your project

- *Your project might look simple but there can be many underlying motivations*
- *Clarify your goals to make sure to achieve what you really want*



## 2. Approaches

- *International activities are too complex to be organized 'scientifically'*
- *Better to be prepared than to plan obsessively*
- *The 5 principles of effectuation summarize the entrepreneurial approach*



## 3. The cultural maze

- *Cultures cannot be anticipated, they result from a series of random events*
- *They must be learned from scratch*
- *Frameworks have been developed to better understand them (Trompenaars, Hofstede, Meyer)*



## 4. Tips

- *Learn the language as fast as you can, many methods can be used at the same time*
- *Engage with people, build a network*
- *If you can find a sherpa, things will be way faster and more simple*