



Quick E-Tips



INTERNATIONAL
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Thank you for subscribing to this newsletter brought to you by International Advantage® - *Leading Across Cultures™*. Every month we bring you tips to help your team and organization, especially those operating in culturally diverse environments, reach their business goals.

Topic of the month: A Free Weekend and a City Park

Answer this question:

“When I have spent a weekend at home during which I have accomplished absolutely nothing, which of the following two descriptions is most likely to reflect my state of mind:

- a. I feel a bit guilty and think about that which I had intended to accomplish, but didn't.
- b. I feel at peace and satisfied, because the weekend is for relaxing.”

This is my standard litmus test scenario to determine whether someone is more “action” oriented or “being” oriented. While every individual around the world is different, due to personality, cultural, and environmental influences, Americans from the U.S. more often tend to be action oriented and are more likely to choose the “a” response. Those from Europe and Mexico tend to more often choose the “b” response.

Since cultural tendencies replicate themselves on various levels of system within that same culture, we can find testimony to the "action" and "being" orientation in many other contexts: in our cities, at work, and so on.

Rod Lenniger, a friend, colleague, and international traveler, (and Executive Vice President of *iCrossing*), made the astute observation about how American (U.S.) and European parks reflect these values: “doing” or “being”. He noticed that most American parks are filled with things to *do* – swings, paddle boats, tennis courts, sand pits, etc. Most European parks are simply for “being” – benches, landscaping, grass, fountains and paths.

Mexico’s parks (and plazas) also reflect their cultural value of “being”, instead of “doing”. In addition to that which you find in European parks, you are also more likely to see bandstands, where musicians and orators are commonly found.

To apply this cultural perspective to the workplace, which behaviors and attitudes do you find at your workplace (or others you've seen) that reflect whether employees are more “action-oriented” or “being oriented”? What have you found to be the workplace benefits (or dilemmas) of each orientation? I wonder how many of you are thinking that workplaces are for "action", and that there is not much place for "being"... Let me hear from you.

Next month I'll explore the answers to the questions above, as it relates to the workplace.

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What's News

Hear me speak!

1. **Topic: "Building Employee Commitment for Organizational Change"**
Where: Guadalajara, Mexico
Sponsored by: Association of Industrial Relations (Asociación de Relaciones Industriales de Occidente A.C.)
When: March 23 & 24, 2007
Language: Spanish
Details: Email me for details or see www.arioac.com.mx
2. **Topic: "Diversity: It's More than Color" - A Panel**
Where: Atlanta, Georgia
Sponsored by: National Association of Women Business Owners, 2007 Women's Business Conference
When: June 2, 2007
Language: English
Details: Email me for details or see www.nawbo.org.
3. **Topic: "Leadership of Your Culturally-Diverse Team"**
Where: Phoenix, AZ
Sponsored by: Arizona Small Business Association
When: September 6, 2007
Language: English
Details: Email me for details.

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To your success around the globe,

Lisa

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