

## A Welcome at the Airport

You are headed to a formal business meeting with somebody you have never met before. When you get off the airplane, a warmly smiling woman wearing jeans and sandals is holding up a sign with your name on it. What do you think?

1. She must be a secretary.

*In a masculine society, gender roles are unequally distributed, and people might have this expectation.*

2. She is probably the person with whom you will have the meeting.

*This expectation could indicate both femininity (you are not amazed that your important partner is a woman) and uncertainty tolerance (you are not taken aback because she is casually dressed).*

3. It is wonderful to be welcomed so warmly.

*This is how somebody from a collectivist society might feel—or indeed anybody who does not take offense.*

4. How dare someone meet you in such an informal outfit.

*This might be the reaction of an important person from a large power distance culture, who would have expected an impressive delegation.*

5. There must be an error, because you were expecting a formal-looking gentleman.

*This would be a typical uncertainty avoiding reaction. If uncertainty avoidance is strong, people are expected to display their position through their clothing, and this woman is not dressed at all formally.*

## The Intruder

You are standing at a reception, engaged in conversation with another person you vaguely know. Suddenly a third person arrives and starts to talk to your conversation partner without seeming to notice you. What do you think?

1. This must be a close friend of your conversation partner.

*This would be the expectation of a person from a collectivist culture.*

2. This must be an absolute brute to push you aside in this manner.

*Somebody from a feminine culture might feel this way.*

3. Your conversation partner should ask the intruder to wait a moment.

*The reaction indicates individualism: you speak with one person at a time. This way of dealing with time is known as monochronic.*

4. This must be a VIP (Very Important Person).

*This thought indicates large power distance.*

5. This must be somebody with a very urgent matter.

*Somebody from an individualist culture might think this way; tasks prevail over relationships.*

6. Your conversation partner should introduce you to the newcomer.

*This would be a collectivist expectation. Your conversation partner can include you in his or her ingroup to which the intruder apparently belongs. In almost all societies, this option would be more acceptable than the next one.*

7. Nothing.

*This might be the reaction of somebody from an individualist, masculine culture; this is normal, acceptable behavior.*