

# Three Colors of Worldview



Report for: **Ahmed Newcastle**

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*This is an Executive Summary of your Three Colors of Worldview Assessment. For more information about the Three Colors of Worldview and your assessment, please go to My KnowledgeWorkx and log in with your username and password.*

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# 1. Introduction

The Three Colors of Worldview<sup>®</sup> is an excellent starting point when analyzing intercultural situations. They are quick to remember and provide an easy, flexible framework through which to understand what is going on in the intercultural world around you. The Three Colors of Worldview<sup>®</sup> get at the culturally driven motivators and demotivators by pointing to underlying beliefs and assumptions.

## 1.1 The Worldviews in a Nutshell

A 'worldview' is a person's way of viewing the world. Everyone looks at the world through colored lenses which affect how they interpret other people's actions and how to respond to them. One person's worldview lens may be different from another, leading them to interpret and respond differently in the same situation.

Like computer displays that create all the different colors you are seeing by mixing red, green and blue, the three paradigms that together form your worldview are Innocence/Guilt, Honor/Shame, and Power/Fear. They drive our interpretations and responses to the world around us and each person's worldview is a different mix of these drivers.

### **Innocence/Guilt**

In an Innocence/Guilt focused culture, education focuses on deductive reasoning, cause and effect, critical analysis and the ability to formulate and engage good questions. Issues are often seen through the lens of predefined standards. Written contracts are paramount. Communication tends to be more direct, and could be perceived as insensitive.

### **Honor/Shame**

Societies with a predominantly Honor/Shame worldview teach children to make honorable choices according to the situations they find themselves in. Communication, interpersonal interaction, and business dealings are very relationship-driven, with every interaction having an effect on the Honor/Shame status of the participants. Often it is not just about the individual but more about the honor/shame status of the family/group/tribe/team they belong to.

### **Power/Fear**

Those with a Power/Fear worldview raise children to develop their ability to assess and navigate hierarchical systems and adjust their behavior to increase their position of power and influence. As they grow up, they learn how to align themselves with the right people to gain influence and power.

# 1. Introduction

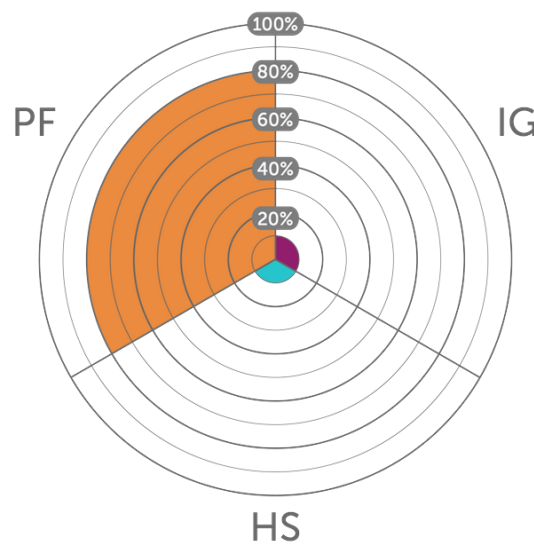
## 1.2 Example

Suppose you are at a crowded beach. Many people are in the water, spending time there with friends and family, and then suddenly you hear a lifeguard blow a whistle. What would the primary reaction be?

For a person with a primary Innocence/Guilt worldview, the most important objective will be to establish innocence of any wrong. The most logical way to do that would be to connect with the lifeguard to see at what or whom he was blowing the whistle. Once innocence is established, the person returns to whatever he/she had been doing before.

A person with a primary Honor-Shame worldview (see example graph below) would likely not even acknowledge the lifeguard at the sound of the whistle because the lifeguard's importance is secondary to that of his/her group. What is most important is to establish honor and to avoid shame, and your honor is connected to the group you belong to. That person would look around at those in the group and find out if he/she is doing something wrong; and if the group does not believe that he/she is doing something dishonorable, that person will continue whatever he/she was doing.

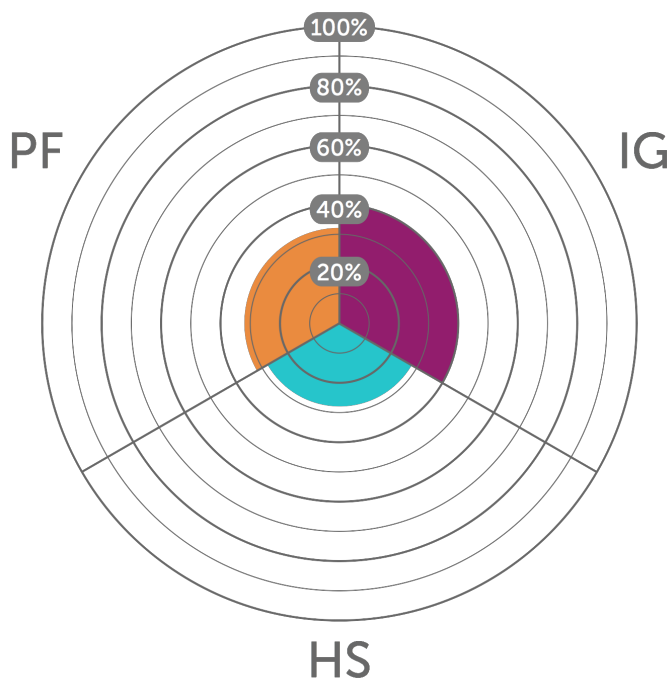
For a person with a primary Power/Fear worldview the main motivation would be to establish whether or not there is something to be afraid of and then to resolve that issue. The lifeguard is not the focus; the lifeguard triggers the mechanism. The focus is on establishing if there is something he/she should fear. This will be done by checking other people and their reactions or by scanning their surroundings.



Example graph of a Primary Power/Fear Worldview

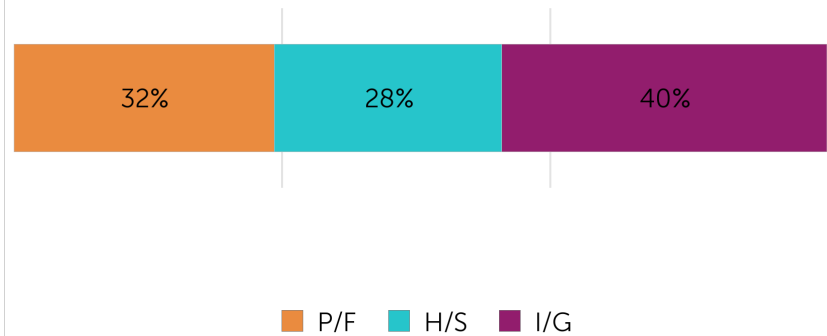
## 2. Your worldview Discovery Tool results

Dear **Ahmed** , below is the graphical representation of your personal worldview, based on the discovery tool outcome. Keep in mind that no one outcome is better than or preferred than another. The important part is to understand your personal drivers, and to be able to quickly assess and accurately understand and interpret the drivers of the person(s) with whom you are interacting. Then you can modify your behavior and communication to improve the outcome of the interaction.



### Your Worldview

Power/Fear : 32%  
Honor/Shame : 28%  
Innocence/Guilt : 40%



### Three Colors of Worldview Personal Profile for Ahmed Newcastle

The Discovery Tool indicates that **Power/Fear, Honor/Shame and Innocence/Guilt are of equal importance in your worldview.**

Every person has elements of all three worldviews and so do you. Your Personal Results show that all three worldviews have a significant presence in your worldview and neither shows up as significantly more dominant than the others. This could greatly help you to develop the ability to be comfortable in and interact with each of the worldviews.

Please read the introductions to each of the worldviews in paragraph 3.2 to 3.4 and take note which elements of each worldview contribute to your own worldview.

It could very well be that the I/G worldview is the primary driver in one part of society like the school system or the legal system; and that H/S and P/F are the primary drivers in other parts of society, like your family or tribe, the culture of the region you live in, or your work/company, etc. As your understanding of each of the worldviews develops, you will be able to better discern this.

It could also be that you or your parents migrated across cultures and that the worldview of your parents is different from the worldview of the society you grew up in and both had a significant impact.

In section 4 you will find information on how to interact with people that have a different worldview. Take note that these descriptions are for the primary drivers only. To apply them to a person with a strong secondary driver, you will have to look at the description of both worldviews and discern which one is at play in the current situation and interaction. In your case all these descriptions will also give you added insight in your own worldview as all drivers have a significant presence.

### 3. The Three Colors of Worldview In More Detail

#### 3.1 What is a "Worldview"?

The Three Colors of Worldview<sup>®</sup> is designed to make sense out of the generic "motivators" and "demotivators" of global societies. Roland Muller (2001), who did anthropological and sociological research among the Bedouin, initiated this research. KnowledgeWorkx has carried that theory further into an application for family, business, education, healthcare, etc.

In the Inter-Cultural Intelligence Framework<sup>®</sup> we use the term worldview to bring awareness to the colored lenses everyone uses to view the world around them. Your worldview greatly affects how you see and interpret the actions of people around you and how you respond to them. Your worldview is a mix of six drivers.

You will find that a person's or society's worldview is never solely based on one worldview. Instead, worldviews are a complex mix of all drivers, yet one or two worldviews are often dominant. As we look at our own worldview through the lens of the Three Colors of Worldview<sup>®</sup> we recognize where our preferences come from, and we better understand the cultural motivators and demotivators of ourselves and others.

The next step is to acquire techniques to develop responses appropriate to the context. Like the chameleon, it involves adjusting the externals, but not changing the DNA.

Take note that the mix and application of the Three Colors of Worldview<sup>®</sup> in a society can and often does change over time. Even within a given society you will find subgroups that place emphasis on different Three Colors of Worldview<sup>®</sup> drivers than the rest of that society. This can be attributed to generational gaps, regional differences, career, education and home environments.

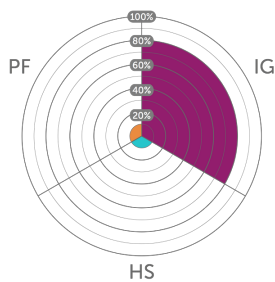
This shifting of the ratio between the worldview elements over time is part of the movement of cultures within a society.



## Using the Three Colors of Worldview<sup>®</sup>

In order to interact effectively in intercultural situations, you need to understand what worldview you are coming from, and what worldview the other person(s) adhere to. Then you can communicate with their worldview in mind, and you can translate the benefits of your product or proposal from your worldview to theirs; you can move forward with confidence that your hard work and expertise will pay off.

### 3.2 The Innocence/Guilt Worldview



In a Innocence/Guilt focused culture, education focuses on deductive reasoning, cause and effect, critical analysis, and the ability to formulate and engage with good questions. Issues are often seen through the lens of predefined standards. Written contracts are paramount. Communication tends to be more direct, and could be perceived as insensitive.

Right-wrong thinking and individual accountability are very much a part of the Innocence/Guilt Worldview. This leads to the building of a legal system where right and wrong actions are established by law. When looking at countries like Germany, the Netherlands, the UK or the United States, it can be noted that the legal systems are enormous. In a Innocence/Guilt oriented society it is important to document the expected behavior before engaging in a relationship. Contracts tend to be rigid and long, and define the relationship rather than being an expression of the relationship.

In a society where Innocence/Guilt is a crucial driver, being right is extremely important. Children are brought up in an educational system that will therefore reason that rights or wrongs are established according to linear lines. The legal system inherently has a linear nature; "If you do this, these are the consequences". Cause and effect thinking, linear reasoning and debate form an integral part of Innocence/Guilt societies. Innocence/Guilt worldview societies predominantly have a very direct way of communicating. Opinions or worldviews (chosen truths) are verbalized and expressed freely.

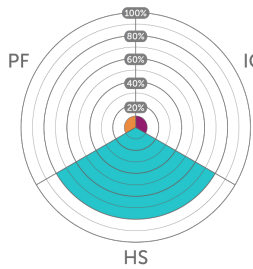
Every one of the worldview drivers can be overused. Because of the high emphasis on innocence, overuse in a Innocence/Guilt society is mainly evident in the area of 'creating your own right and creating your own wrong'. As you establish your own right and your own wrong, the balance of the Innocence/Guilt equation begins to change. Situational ethics is a typical challenge that is driven by discussion on creating or proving 'innocence'. People might stretch the law to the point where innocence is still ensured, irrelevant of behavior. Or if they have enough influence in society they might even work towards finding clauses or phrases in the law that can be reinterpreted to make an individual seem innocent.





Another way that overuse manifests in Innocence/Guilt cultures is where the pursuit of innocence becomes all consuming. One example would be that the fear of corruption, bribes or lack of transparency has led many organizations to put elaborate systems and processes in place to make sure they can prove that everything is done by the book.

### 3.3 The Honor/Shame Worldview



Children raised in an Honor/Shame environment are taught life-skills that focus on maintaining and enhancing their honor and the honor of their family, tribe or nation. A core skill in this is the ability to read the context and the people in that context in order to make honorable choices according to the situations they find themselves in. Children are taught who is who and how they relate to the group, not just today but also in history. People will build up a database of historic, and relational data that help him or her know how to navigate their environment.

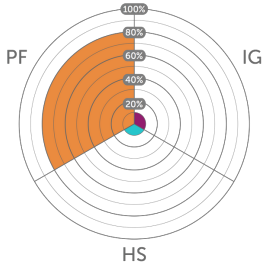
Communication, interpersonal interaction, and business dealings are very relationship-driven, with every interaction having an effect on the Honor/Shame status of the participants. In an Honor/Shame society the crucial objective is to avoid shame and to be viewed honorably by other people, especially the members of the group one belongs to. If a person brings shame upon the group, usually the group, not the authorities, will deliver the consequences.

Most Honor/Shame societies are group cultures with community accountability as a cultural dimension. This often results in indirect communication and cautious information sharing. The Honor/Shame worldview is especially strong in parts of Africa, South America, Asia and the Middle East.

The challenge of this worldview is found in the overuse of honor or shame drivers. Because the focus is on avoiding shame and establishing honor, people may want to establish honor at all costs. The only way to do this is by hiding actions that might be deemed dishonorable or that might cause shame. "A shame covered is a shame half redeemed", is a proverb from an Honor/Shame culture that touches on this abuse mechanism.

### 3.4 The Power/Fear Worldview

Children raised in Power/Fear environments learn from an early age to detect and recognize the power structure and hierarchy in every setting. They learn to align themselves with the right people to enhance their own or the power base of the family/group they are loyal to. It differs from Honor/Shame environments because



Power/Fear environments are more focused on the hierarchical situation today and less on the historical context. Power/Fear mechanisms are used in very positive ways to empower people in the environment by giving boundaries or assistance in making sound decisions. A ruler, supervisor or family leader who empowers and is seen as benevolent will be a great asset to his or her people.

Avoiding or managing fear is crucial in the Power/Fear worldview. A child will learn at an early age how to navigate life in a way that their choices of allegiance will result in the least amount of fear. In most cases these choices will lead to a certain amount of fear that a person will accept as 'part of the package'. Joining the cool group of kids at school because you want to belong might mean being asked by the leader of the pack to do things you don't really want to do. Saying 'No' to your supervisor because he is asking you to do something questionable might be more dangerous than the actual thing he is asking you to do; so you comply and do it anyway.

Unfortunately, many people in positions of power try to stay in those positions by instilling fear in their subordinates. The balance of fear subsequently dictates how long the person will stay in power or how much power that person will have. Examples of countries with a Power/Fear worldview are North Korea, Zimbabwe, and Tajikistan. The balance of Power/Fear is not only present on the political level but can exist in the social or corporate arena. Even a household can be ruled by Power/Fear.

Power/Fear has the most obvious abuse mechanism. This is engaged by using power to establish as much fear as possible in the people underneath, instead of using the power to establish trust. This is why the most absolute and vicious types of dictatorship tend to be found in the power versus fear areas of the world.

### 3.5 Primary and Secondary Worldviews

All societies are a complex mix of all three worldviews. Sometimes one worldview is obviously the dominant driver while sometimes a second worldview is also (quite) dominant. As all worldviews evolve over time, the cause of changes in the mix of drivers are many times hard to pinpoint. In some societies, the secondary (or the primary) worldview is a result of (past) colonialism, occupation or immigration. Other societies have one worldview on the national level and another worldview rules responses on the smaller scale entities like neighborhoods, schools, sports clubs or families.

What we see frequently is Power/Fear as a secondary worldview to either Innocence/Guilt or Honor/Shame. In many cases the Power/Fear worldview is the mechanism that upholds and enforces the values of the primary worldview. A society that operates out of a Innocence/Guilt worldview, for instance, might have a strong and repressive law

enforcement system to enforce the values of the Innocence/Guilt oriented society. Likewise, a society that operates out of a strong Honor/Shame worldview, might have a strong and violent "code of honor" that instills fear and enforces the Honor/Shame values of the society. However, in case of a Innocence/Guilt oriented society, enforcement would most likely be done by government representatives and, in case of an Honor/Shame oriented society, enforcement would be done by members of the group.

On a personal scale you might observe the blend of a primary and a secondary worldview with immigrants, Third Culture Kids (TCKs) and, to a lesser extent, expatriates. When the society where the person lives has a different worldview than their family and friends more than one worldview might be developed. This could result in positive synergize, co-existence or clash between those worldviews in the person's thinking, speaking and acting.

In situations of extreme stress, it might happen that suddenly the secondary worldview is the driving force for someone's behavior as that was the worldview in the deepest level of someone's heart (iceberg) and the "primary" worldview was a convention the person learned to adhere to, appreciate and think along.

In those cases it is crucial to have a firm understanding of all three worldviews, how the drivers are manifesting and if the drivers are having an enabling or disabling effect on all people involved.

## 4. Relating to people with another Worldview

There is no rulebook for interacting with people with a different worldview than yours (or for interacting with people who do share your worldview). The sections below give general recommendations. Please keep in mind that we should always be in 'learning mode' when it comes to intercultural interactions. This way we develop strategies that result in meaningful relationships and outcomes.

The recommendations were written for interacting with a person with one primary worldview. When you discover that the person you interact with has more than one dominant worldview, you use your understanding of both worldviews to adjust behavior.

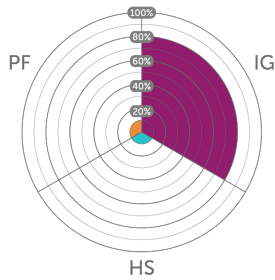
### 4.1 Living out the strength of *my* Worldview

No worldview or mix of worldviews is better than the other. They are simply the lenses through which we view the world. Each worldview has its strengths and its weaknesses. Where most of us struggle when evaluating a different worldview is that we "see the speck in the other's eye, but overlook the plank in our own eye".



What this means is that we can clearly identify every instance where another group or person overuses a driver that belongs to their worldview, but overlook all the instances where we do the same. The charge to ourselves is to overcome our (deepest) fears and insecurities, identify where we operate out of an abuse mechanism and move away from that abuse mechanism. In intercultural interactions this is closely related to moving from Cultural Critic behavior to Cultural Learner behavior.

## 4.2 Interacting with a person with a primary I/G worldview



People with a primary I/G worldview might align with the following:

- Passionate about making the right choices in life.
- Focus on establishing what is right and what is wrong.
- Depend on laws, guidelines, policies, contracts, procedures and codes.
- Rely on written agreements and contracts to guide behavior.
- Focus on establishing global consistency to ensure reliability and structure.
- Goal/issue centric negotiating.
- Fairness, consistency and transparency are important words.

Some key behaviors that characterize people with a primary I/G worldview are:

- Get frustrated when things don't happen as per the policy.
- Tend to use direct communication.
- Assumption can be made that compliance to the rules are, in the end, always good for relationships.
- Hold individuals accountable for their actions using "I", "You".
- Often rewards an individual's performance based on ability and proven successes.
- Will use the established law, policy, and procedures to fight for their right or establish their innocence/value.

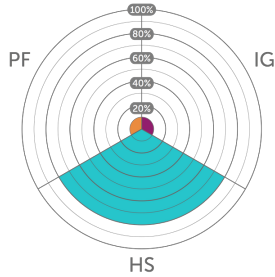
Usually, schools focus on developing deductive reasoning, critical thinking, cause and effect, good questions and process as important skills and these are seen as important values. These skills and values are indeed a strength of your worldview, as is the ability for productive brainstorming. However, you might find that these skills are less valued and less developed in other worldviews.

The way Innocence/Guilt plays out in the business world is that being right or wrong can be very important in negotiations, in brainstorming sessions, and in collaborating as a team. The worldview is continually there to help establish the correct answer to problems and to



help people work together to find out what right or wrong actions would be.

### 4.3 Interacting with a person with a primary H/S worldview



People with a primary H/S worldview might align with the following:

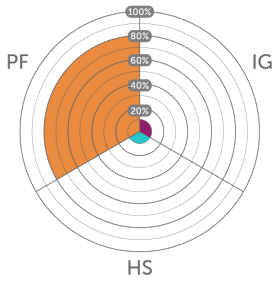
- Focus on establishing what will bring honor and what will bring shame to the group.
- Depend on key relationships within the group to leverage from and influence others.
- Rely strongly on verbal commitment to build relationships.
- Relationship centric negotiating.
- Loyalty and commitment are based on long-term nurtured relationships.
- Focus on enhancing or maintaining the honor of the group as well as the individual relationships.

Some key behaviors that characterize people with a primary H/S worldview are:

- Tend to use indirect communication to influence others.
- Might make standards and policies subservient if they do not serve the relationship.
- Place higher value on the pursuit of group goals.
- Group is held accountable for growth & improving performance.
- Link performance evaluation to the network of people and relationships.
- Historical events are important to consider the development of today's relationships.

Strengths of the H/S worldview are its focus on relationships and the loyalty and commitment that go with it. It tends to put the person first while contracts, rules and regulations are to serve relationships, not the other way around.

## 4.4 Interacting with a person with a primary P/F worldview



People with a primary P/F worldview might align with the following:

- Focus on establishing what will enhance or maintain power base.
- Depend on position in the hierarchy to influence others.
- Rely on verbal commitment to build relationships.
- Loyalty and commitment is linked to power position in the relationship.
- Relationship centric negotiating.
- A position of power can be used to instill fear in people around them to ensure compliance and loyalty.
- A position of power can also be used to empower people around them.

Some key behaviors that characterize people with a primary P/F worldview are:

- Use of direct communication and strong language to ensure compliance, i.e. do as I say!
- Communication:
  - Upward - Mostly indirect
  - Downward - Mostly direct
- Get frustrated when pushed to follow procedures and policies.
- Aggressive in ensuring compliance with direct reports.
- Reward performance based on strong loyalty and compliance.
- Invest energy to ensure they can work for or be seen by people with positions of power.

Strengths of the P/F worldview are its focus on relationships and the loyalty and commitment that go with it. It tends to put the person first, while contracts, rules and regulations are there to serve the people, not the other way around.

Strengths of the P/F worldview are that an appropriate amount of fear can keep you out of trouble. Power/Fear mechanisms also shine when they are used to empower people in the environment by giving boundaries or assistance in making sound decisions. A ruler, supervisor or family leader who empowers and is seen as benevolent will be a great asset to his or her people.

## 5. My Insights and Actions

### 5.1 My Steps

Understanding the results:

Write down one or two ways in which the results represent you and your behavior. Write down one or two ways in which your thinking or behavior was consistent with your discovery tool results.

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Recognizing your positive impact:

Write down 2 examples where your behavior resulted in a positive contribution to an intercultural situation. Write down which worldview drivers were at play.

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Recognizing your negative impact:

Write down examples where your behavior resulted in a negative contribution to an intercultural situation. Write down which worldview drivers were at play.

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Using the results for growth:

Based on the examples above, write down where personal growth would be helpful in understanding and relating to each of the worldview drivers.

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## 5.2 What's Next?

Congratulations, you took the Discovery Tool, and reviewed the report to get a better understanding of your own worldview and what drives you. What are good next steps to take to leverage the understanding of your cultural worldview?

- Keep discovering more about yourself. The best way to improve your interactions with others is to understand yourself better. Reread the pages that describe the drivers of your worldview and take note which ones are applicable to you and how they unfold in your life.
- Become a people observer. Observe how people are acting and interacting and think about what drives them. Practicing this and making it a habit in your own environment will help you tremendously when you step out of your (cultural) comfort zone.
- Use the Pointers. When interacting with people who have a different worldview, use the pointers given in chapter 4. Just remember, that they are not a blueprint that tell you exactly (or roughly) how to interact with somebody, who has that worldview, but pointers to help you get started on the journey of discovering how to interact.

### Further Learning Options

- [MyKW web portal](#): The MyKW portal is your gateway to discovering ICI. You can log in with the same user name and password you used for the Discovery Tool. In the portal pages, you'll find the full version of this report, links to articles about ICI and The Three Colors of Worldview<sup>®</sup> and links to e-learning options.
- [Workshops](#): If you want to develop further in ICI, attending a workshop is a good place to start. They help to build ICI related competencies and introduce you to a network of fellow practitioners. KnowledgeWorkx regularly organizes public workshops and also facilitates in-house workshops when requested.
- [Coaching](#): Training improves potential, coaching improves performance. For many people, coaching is a great way to help put whatever you learned into practice.
- [Certification](#): Several times a year KnowledgeWorkx organizes certification workshops for those who want to become a champion for ICI. These are in-depth 4-day workshops with added e-learning components and are the first step in becoming a certified ICI facilitator.
- [Get the ICI Book](#): This book is a product of our two decades experience, research and application of the Inter-Cultural Intelligence (ICI) framework and methodology.