

WORKING IN A MULTI-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

WHAT IS CULTURE?

Culture

The beliefs, customs, arts, etc.,
or a way of thinking, behaving,
or working that exists in a
particular society, group, place,
or time

Aspects of Culture

- ▣ Systems of shared ideas
 - Religion
 - Values, attitudes, beliefs, norms
 - Manners and customs
 - Concepts of learned behaviours
- ▣ Social institutions
- ▣ History
- ▣ Education

CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

Geert Hofstede

- ▣ Power Distance
- ▣ Individualism
- ▣ Masculinity
- ▣ Uncertainty Avoidance
- ▣ Long-Term Orientation
- ▣ Indulgence

Power Distance

Accept / Expect unequal power distribution

High	Low
• Accept a hierarchical structure • Everyone has a place	• Strive to equalize the distribution of power
• No further justification is needed	• Demand justification for inequalities of power

Individualism

Self Image – I or We?

High – Individualistic	Low – Collectivist
• Loosely-knit social framework	• Tightly-knit framework in society
• Individuals are expected to take care of themselves and immediate families	• Can expect relatives or members of a particular in-group to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty

Masculinity

Competition vs. Consensus

High - Masculinity	Low - Femininity
• Preference for: • Achievement • Heroism • Assertiveness • Material rewards for success • Society is more competitive	• Preference for: • Cooperation • Modesty • Caring for the weak • Quality of life • Society at large is more consensus-oriented

Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncomfortable with Uncertainty/ Ambiguity

High	Low
• Rigid codes of belief and behavior	• More relaxed attitude
• Desire more stability	• More comfortable with ambiguity
• Less comfortable taking risks	• More willing to take risks

Long-Term Pragmatism

Focused on the Future?

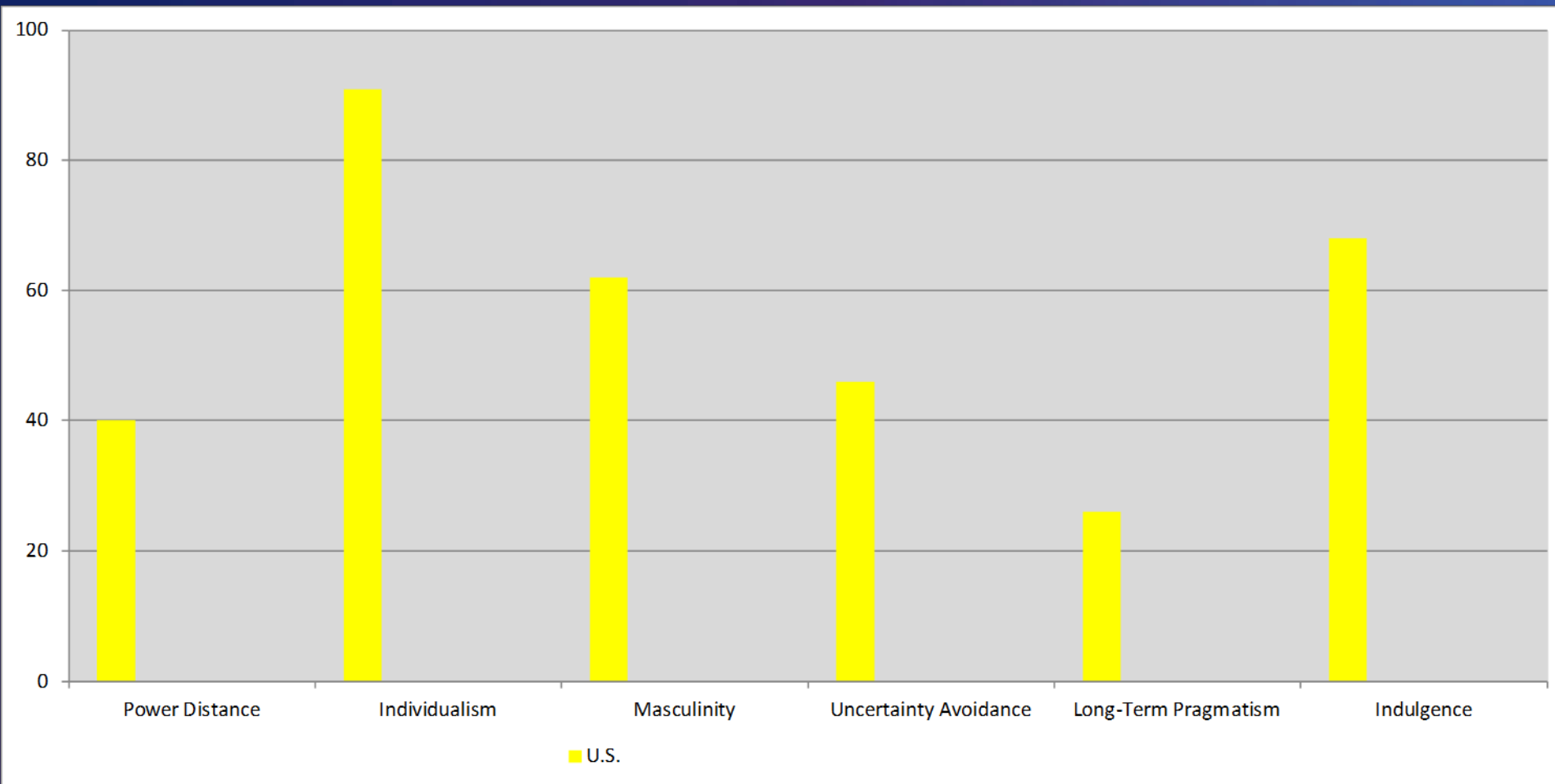
High – Long-Term	Low – Short-Term
• Focused on the future	• Focused on the present
• Good and evil depends on circumstances	• Universal standard for good and evil
• Traditions adaptable to circumstance	• Traditions are sacrosanct
• Large savings for future	• Current spending/consumption
• Educational success/failure do to effort or lack thereof	• Educational success/failure do to luck

Indulgence

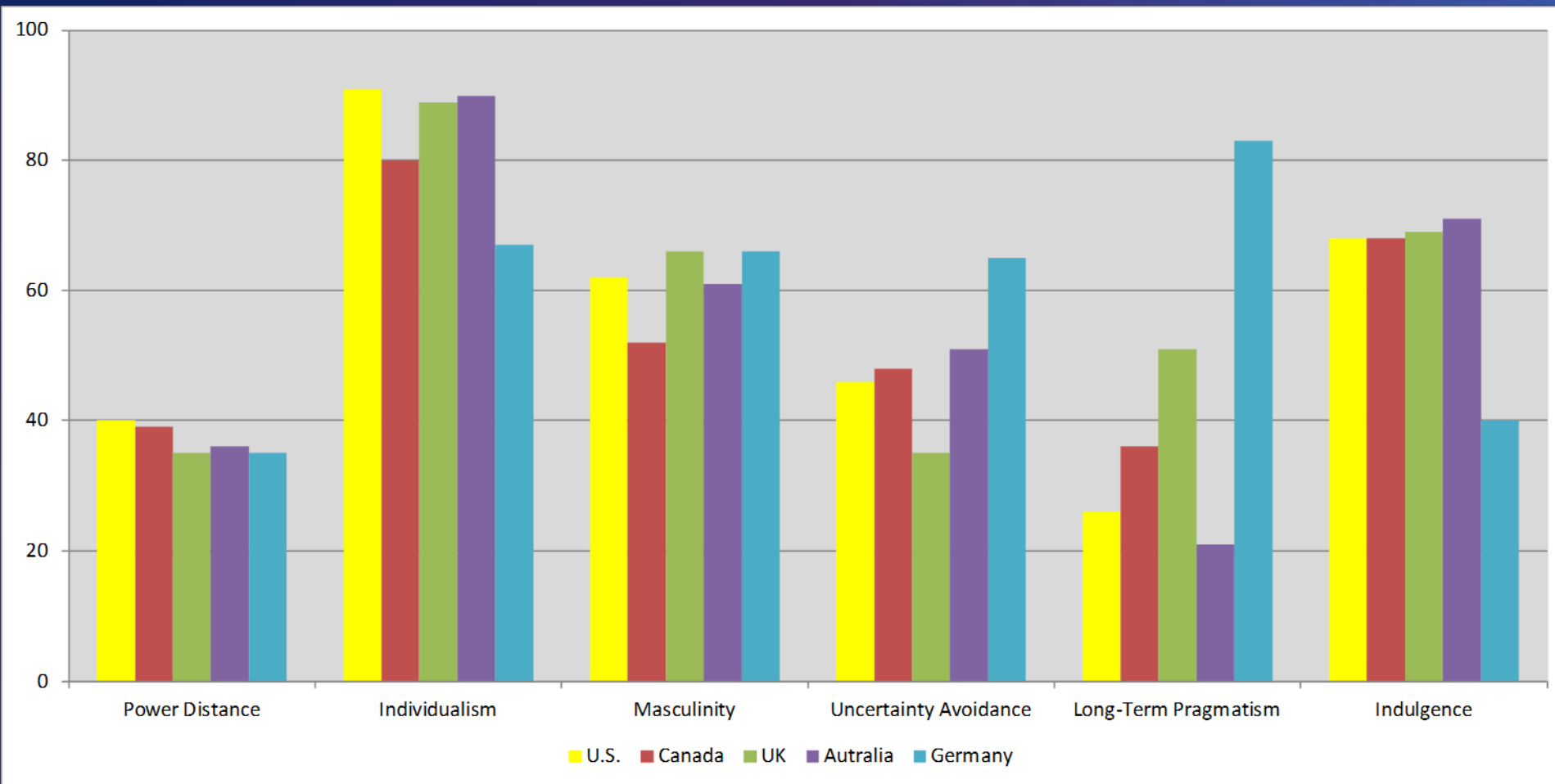
Let the Good Times Roll?

High – Indulgence	Low – Restraint
• Free gratification of basic and natural human drives related to enjoying life and having fun	• Suppress gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms

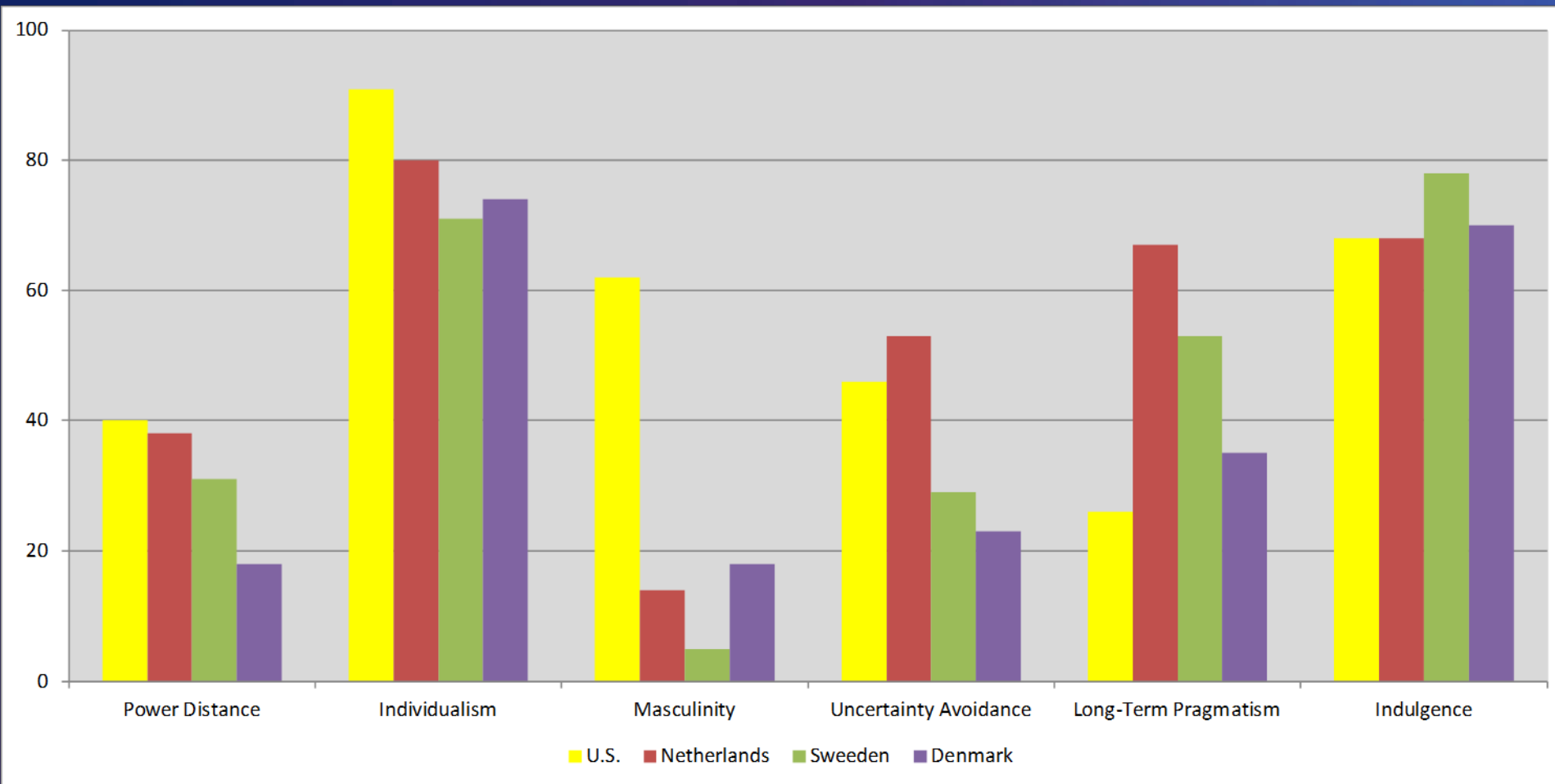
Country Comparisons



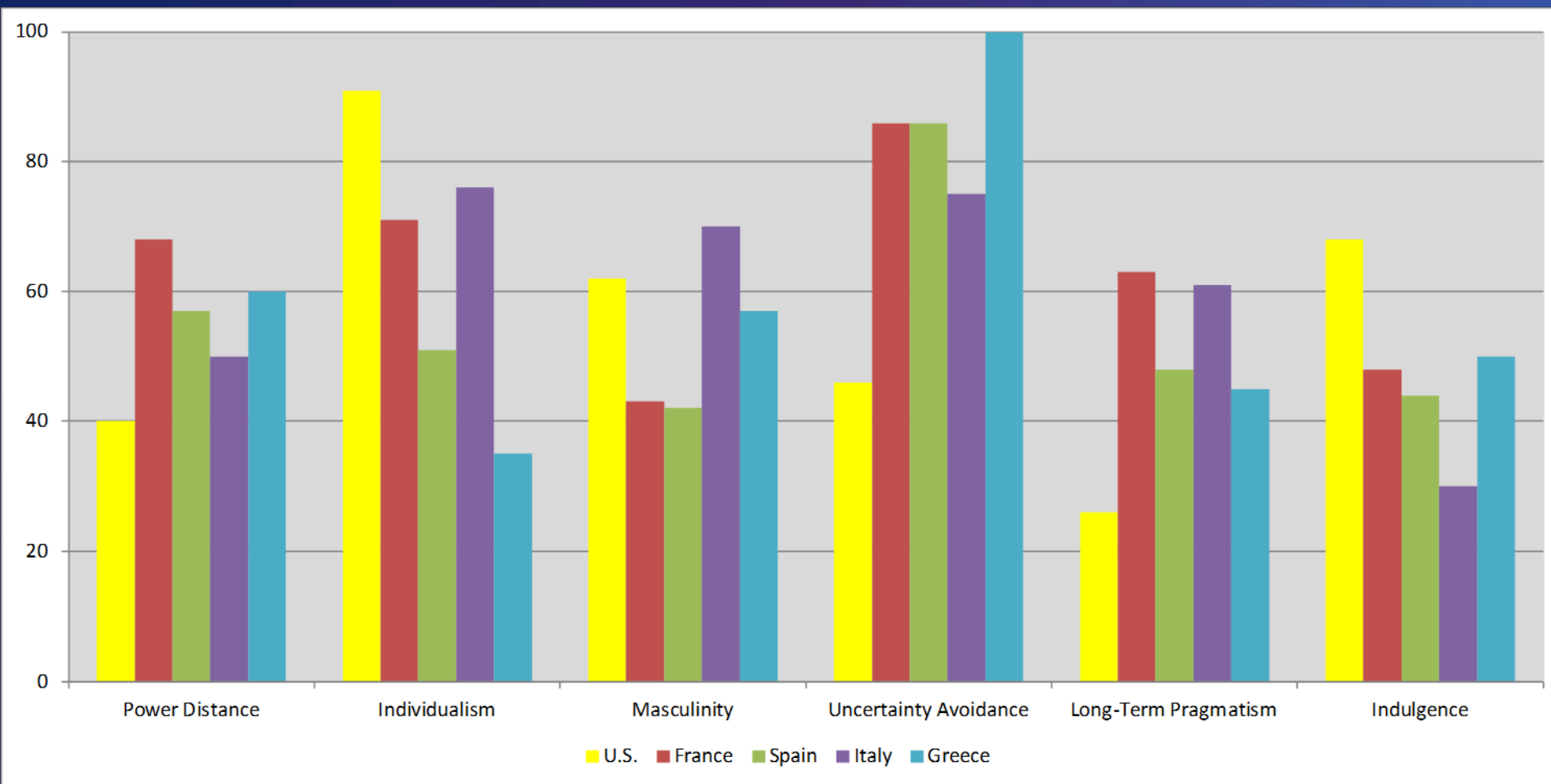
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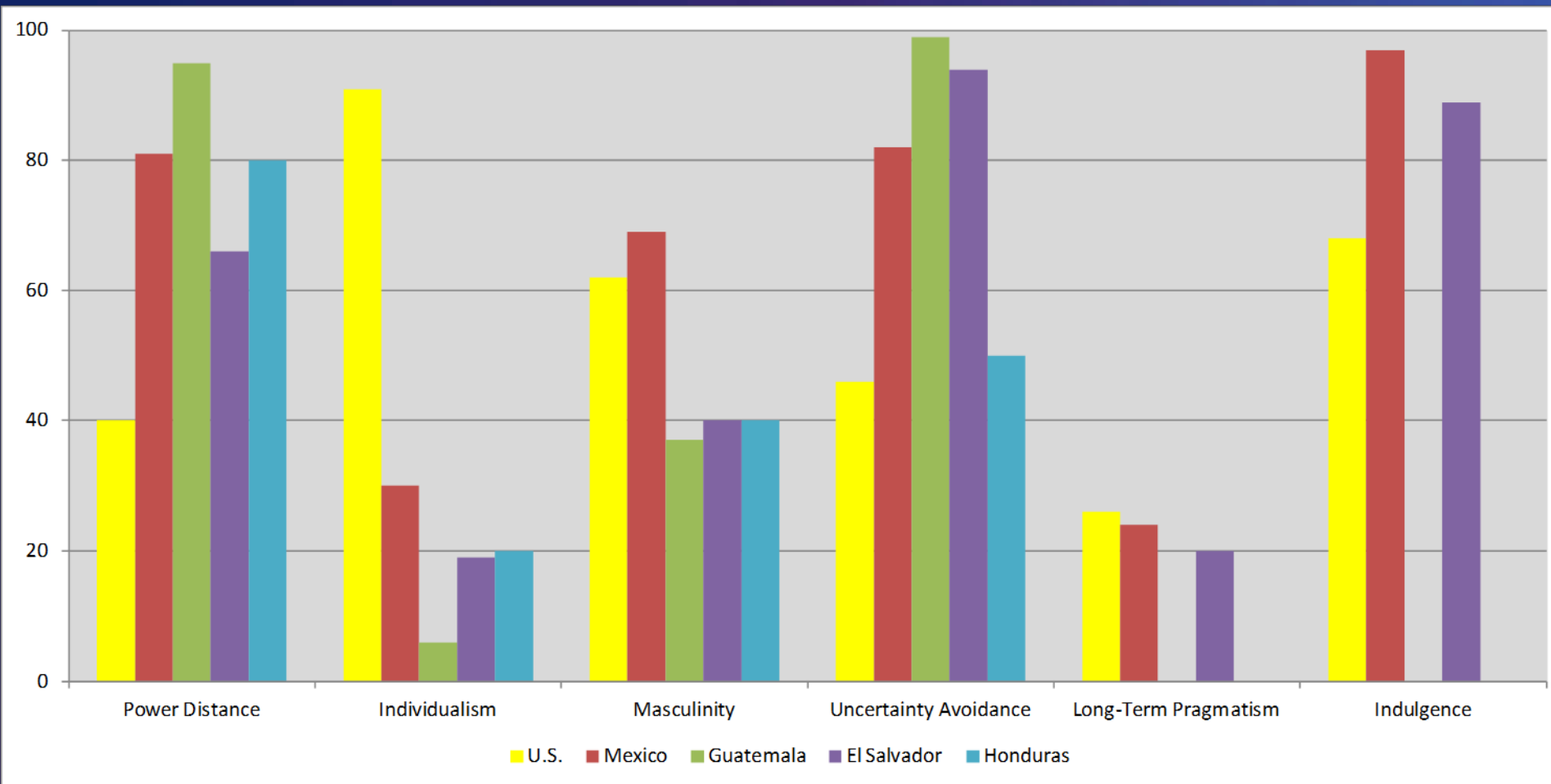
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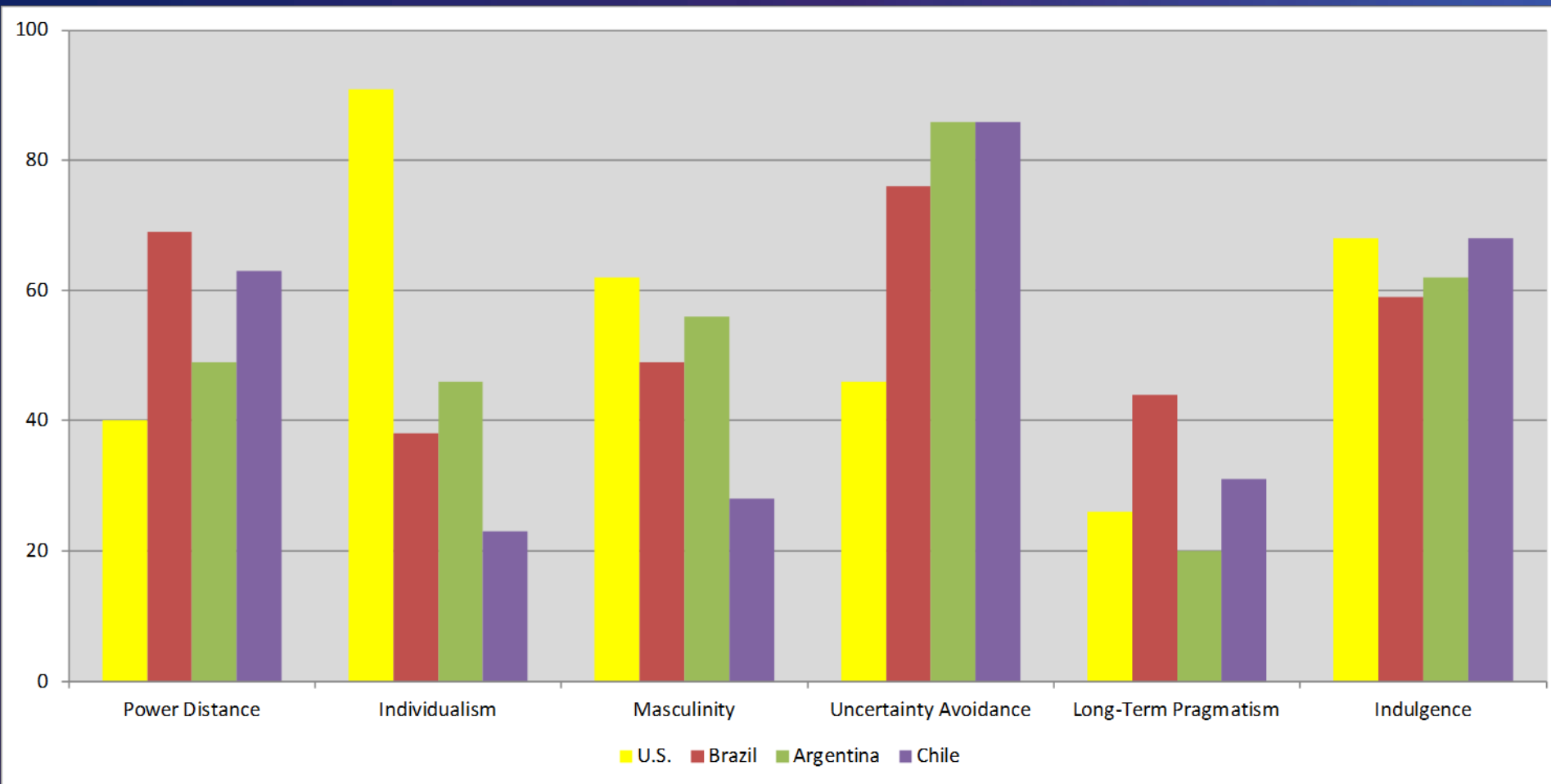
Country Comparisons



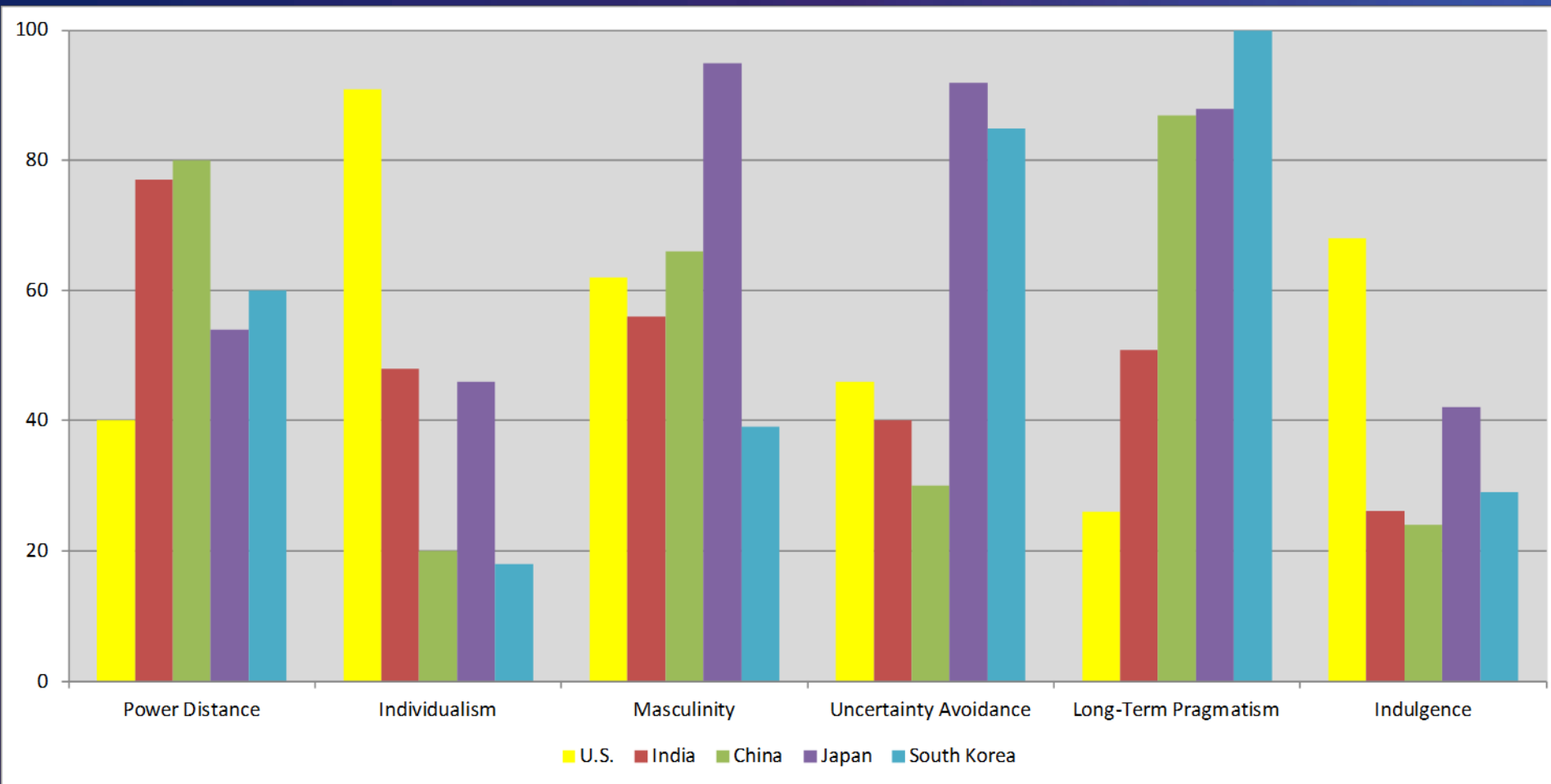
Country Comparisons



Country Comparisons



Country Comparisons



Edward Hall

- ▣ Context

- ▣ Time

- ▣ Space

Content

High Content	Low Content
• Many contextual elements to understand the “unwritten” rules	• Overt and explicit messages that are simple and clear
• Much nonverbal communication	• More focus on verbal than nonverbal communication
• Strong distinction between in-group and out-group	• Flexible and open grouping patterns, changing as needed
• Relationship more important than task	• Task more important than relationships
• Time open and flexible	• Time highly organized

Time

Monochronic	Polychronic
• Concentrate on the job at hand	• Easily distracted
• Think about when things must be achieved	• Think about what will be achieved, not when
• Put the job first	• Put relationships first
• Emphasize promptness	• Base promptness on relationship factors
• Do one thing at a time	• Do many things at once

Space

High Territory	Low Territory
• Big personal bubble	• Small personal bubble
• Seek to mark out the areas which are theirs	• Space and boundaries are less important
• Greater concern for ownership	• Share territory and ownership with little thought
• Tend to be low context	• Tend to be high context

Region Comparisons

Low Context

- ▣ U.S., Canada, Australia, Northern Europe, Israel

High Context

- ▣ Latin America, Southern Europe, Turkey, Middle East, Asia, Africa

Region Comparisons

Monochronic

- ▣ U.S., Canada, Australia, Turkey, Northern Europe, parts of Asia

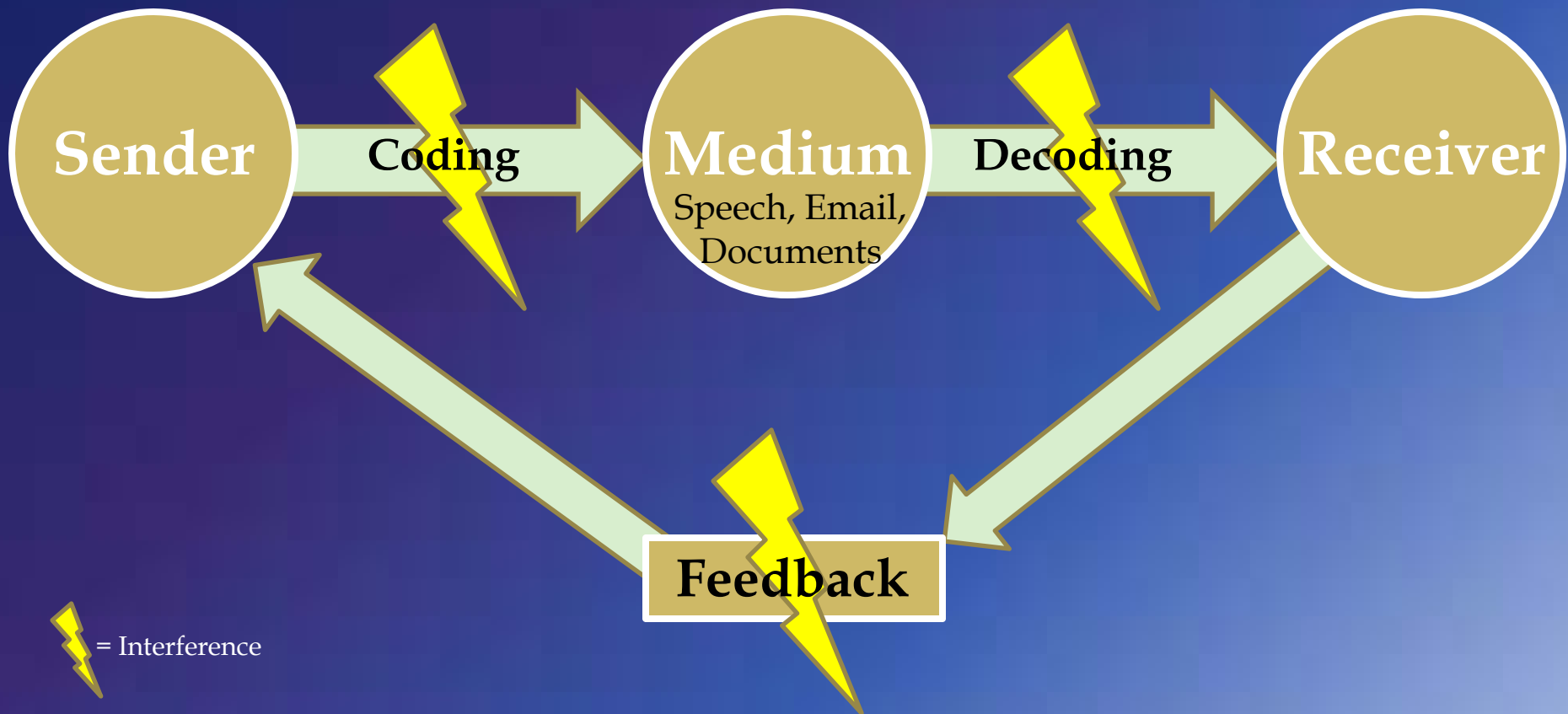
Polychronic

- ▣ Latin America, Southern Europe, Middle East, Southeast Asia, China, Africa

SO WHAT?

Communication Theory

Does my message translate?



Business Interactions

- ▣ Cognizant of how people react & think
- ▣ Sound comprehension of mindsets
- ▣ Involve and listen to people
- ▣ Recognize and value of diversity
- ▣ Managerial power – culturally biased
 - Technical competence
 - Relationships

Business Interactions

Culture Affects

- ▣ Business etiquette
- ▣ Work relationships
- ▣ Negotiations

Expectations

QUESTIONS?

Thinking Like an American

