

Book Review

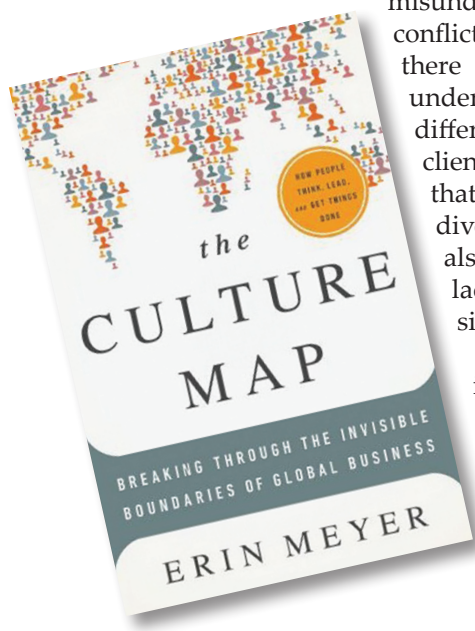
JONATHAN PARK

Meyer, Erin. 2014 .

The Culture Map: Breaking Through the Invisible Boundaries of Global Business
New York: Public Affairs. ISBN: 9780981907697.
165 pp. Kindle version \$14.99.

A culture can no longer be an island to itself and without crossing cultural boundaries, one can no longer be relevant. We now live in a global world. Cultural diversity does bring benefit to the world of business and to churches. However, diversity in culture also brings confusion, misunderstanding, and unnecessary conflict. Businesses can suffer if there is not good communication or understanding of the similarities and differences between coworkers or clients. The church is an institution that is supposed to embrace diversity, but that diversity can also create conflict if there is a lack of understanding of cultural similarities and differences.

To minimize the breakdown in communication and working relationships in the business world, Erin Meyer has done extensive research in many countries to identify continuums of a cultural map where people can visually



identify differences and similarities between countries and cultures in eight areas: communication, feedback, persuasion, leading, deciding, trust, disagreements, and the management of time. This map can be used to identify where different cultures fall relative to other cultures to help people navigate and adapt to the cultural differences.

The benefits of understanding these continuums of differences in eight cultural areas can not only help people in business but also in church settings better navigate an increasingly global world and can encourage bridge building between cultures to better facilitate business and church activities.

Leaders have always needed to understand human nature and personality differences to be successful in business—that's nothing new. What's new is the requirement for twenty-first century leaders to be prepared to understand a wider, richer array of work styles than ever before and to be able to determine what aspects of an interaction are simply a result of personality and which are a result of differences in cultural perspective. (Meyer 2014:143)

With such an understanding of human and cultural differences, one can be a much more effective leader in today's world. I highly recommend this book to all leaders who work with people from diverse cultures.