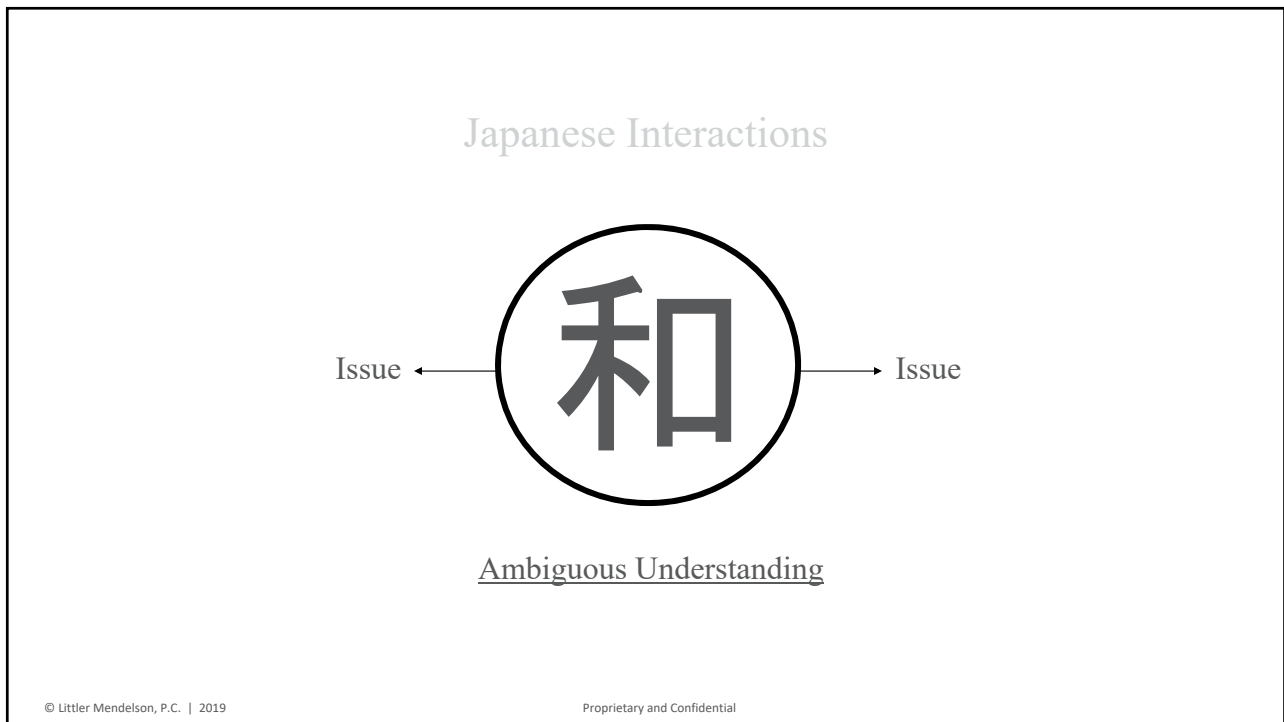
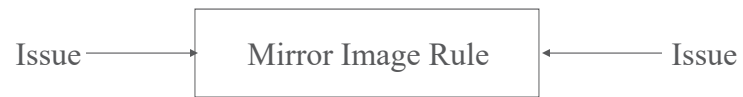


# CONFUS~~C~~IANISM

- Filial Piety
- Humaneness
- Ritual Consciousness



## U.S. and England Interactions



Exact Understanding

Direct -- Indirect

# 臭い物に蓋

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## RULE OF LAW

(disputes are resolved in court)

-VS -

## CONFUCIANISM

(it is a disgrace if you cannot resolve your own disputes)

**事業家の地獄**

**弁護士の天国**

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## WHAT IS CULTURE? THE IMPORTANCE OF "FACE"

### Westerners

- OK to politely correct/disagree with someone if you think they are wrong.
- Criticism accepted so long as it's constructive and helps us get the job done.
- People don't lose face when you disagree with them or say no to them.
- Results are what ultimately matter, and a lot is forgiven so long as you "produce."
- Confrontation is sometimes considered necessary to clear the air.
- People do not use expressions like "saving face" or "losing face," although they know what they mean.

### Easterners

- People try to be sensitive to other people's face, especially one's superiors.
- Criticism and correction must be handled very carefully.
- Confrontation and conflict must be avoided if possible, so it's best to always try to agree with people, especially superiors and especially in public.
- Saving face is critically important, sometimes at the expense of achieving optimal results, if you protect people's dignity.



## MANAGEMENT STYLES: DECENTRALIZED V. CENTRALIZED

### Decentralized

- Hands-off management.
- Power is decentralized, not closely held.
- Managers delegate authority and responsibility—they empower their staff—and try not to second guess them (but managers should be kept in the loop).
- Minimal supervision; staff are expected to be self-directed and independent.
- Bosses expect staff to use their own judgment, challenge dubious guidance, and take ownership (make their own decisions) about whatever has been delegated to them.

### Centralized

- More authoritarian, hands-on management.
- Managers are less likely to delegate or share power with staff.
- Managers expect staff to consult before making (even routine) decisions or acting on their own authority.
- Managers are expected to give detailed guidance, and staff are expected to follow it.
- Staff does not openly challenge/disagree with managers in front of others (e.g. in a meeting).
- Managers retain “ownership” (ultimate responsibility) for most decisions.

## CONCEPT OF RANK AND STATUS

### Egalitarian:

- Rank and status are de-emphasized; relations between the ranks are informal.
- Very collaborative work environment, staff input frequently solicited.
- Staff expected to freely express views, opinions, including disagreements, without having to be asked.
- Your position in the hierarchy does not limit your responsibility to offer your views, ask questions, or challenge dubious instructions.
- The best decisions are made when all parties to an issue get together and have an open exchange of views..

### Hierarchical:

- Rank and status carry more weight; relations between staff and superiors are more formal.
- Showing respect to higher-ups—by not challenging dubious instructions, not offering opposing opinions—is more important than saying exactly what you think, especially in meetings.
- Superiors solicit input from staff informally, one-on-one.
- Higher ranking people have more experience and should be trusted with most decisions.
- Staff may not be comfortable giving their input unless they are asked.

## COMMUNICATION STYLES: DIRECT V. INDIRECT

### Direct

- People expect others to say what they're thinking and not just what the other person wants to hear.
- Usually no need to "read between the lines."
- Negative feedback should be polite but important to "tell it like it is."
- If you disagree with something/know a better way, you should say so, even at a meeting.
- "Yes" usually means yes; people are not afraid to disagree or say no.
- What is not said is not a message.

### Indirect

- People can't always say what they're thinking.
- May need to read between the lines—people sometimes feel, to avoid conflict or confrontation, need to say what the other person wants to hear.
- Critical feedback takes the form of the absence of positive feedback, or faint praise.
- People try not to disagree with others, especially superiors, in a meeting/in front of others.
- "Yes" is not usually an answer, just a polite response.
- The real message is often in what is not said.

## To Terminate or Not....

Sir Laughs-a-Lot (SLL) is a US multinational with employees throughout Asia. Some countries have only 2 or 3 employees; others have 100 or more. The Regional Human Resource Head, Jean, is based in Asia and reports to the Chief HRO in the United States. Jean has a 'toxic' personality. She gets her work done and it is accurate. But, no laughs when she is around; in fact, she offends everyone by her rudeness. Employees don't trust her - there is a rumor she has leaked private information and might be colluding with a competitor but there is no proof. Her employment contract promises no severance.

SLL insists on firing her immediately. They have suggested 'restructuring' so her position is eliminated and the regional HR responsibilities are transferred back to the US. Or, they want to tell her that things are not working out and she must look for a job elsewhere.

## COMMON SENSE COMMUNICATING

1. Avoid slang words: "first responders"
2. Don't assume thorough understanding of English.
3. Speak a bit more slowly and carefully.
4. First, think; then speak.
5. Don't demand a response
6. Permit silence
7. Avoid jokes
8. Exchange cards, be respectful, look at it
9. Formality is always the safer bet (use "Mr.")
10. Don't use first names
11. Handshakes are OK: don't overdo it
12. Thank for courtesy and hospitality
13. Express pleasure to be in Japan / Korea / China etc.
14. Do your homework; know and praise the Company
15. Be on time

## FINAL THOUGHTS

- The cause of many workplace lawsuits or loss of productivity from employee leaving is a feeling of perceived unfairness or indignity.
- It is important for both sides to understand each other, and to give each side the benefit of the doubt – generally, everyone’s intention is good.
- Expatriates need to set a good example to local employees and to be proactive in preventing unfair treatment, discrimination and harassment.
- Local employees need to be welcoming to expatriates; both expatriates and locals need to understand that they come from different cultures and may have different communication styles.