



PRESENTED BY CAREER ADVISING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT &  
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS OFFICE

# PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

IN THE US  
WORKPLACE

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OVERVIEW

# Today's Topics



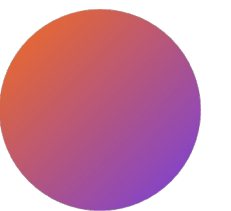
**Networking**



**Applying for jobs**

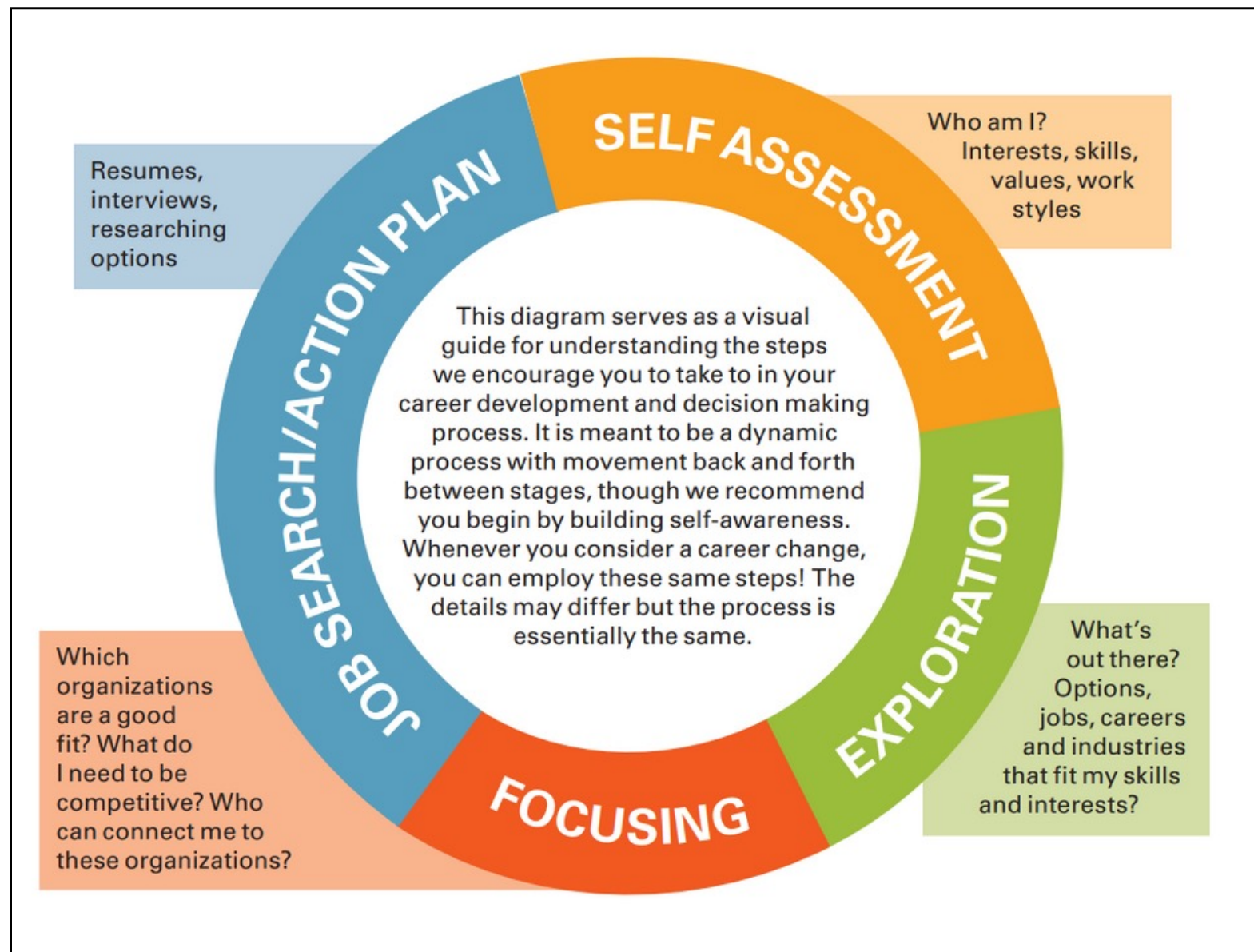


**In the workplace**





# Networking and career development



**Self-assessment** – your network can help you reflect on your own personal interests, skills, values, and work styles

**Exploration** – informational interviews and career conversations can help you explore your options

**Focusing** – people within your network can give you strategic information or referrals for a successful job search

**Job search/action plan** – network connections can provide you with feedback and insight on the job search process

[LEARN MORE](#)



# Your networks

**Personal network** – includes your friends, family and inner circle

**Operational network** – includes classmates, team members, and your co-workers

**Strategic network** – professors, bosses, PI's, professionals in your field, administrators at MIT, mentors



# Networking at Events

## *Before, During, & After*

### **Before the event**

- Do research and prepare talking points
- Ask yourself, “what do I want to learn?” and “what do I want to share?”

### **Starting a conversation**

- Prepare an abstract/brief introduction
- Use commonalities as a basis for conversation

### **Helpful small-talk guidelines**

- Offer a genuine compliment
- Talk about the event itself
- Bring up current events relevant to the event/location
- Talk about general interests/hobbies
- Avoid polarizing topics (religion, politics)
- Plan your exit strategy

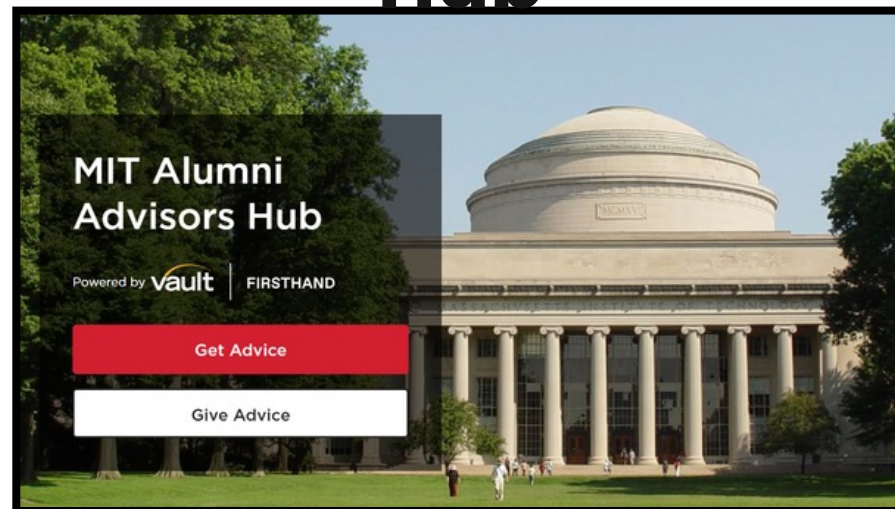




NETWORKING

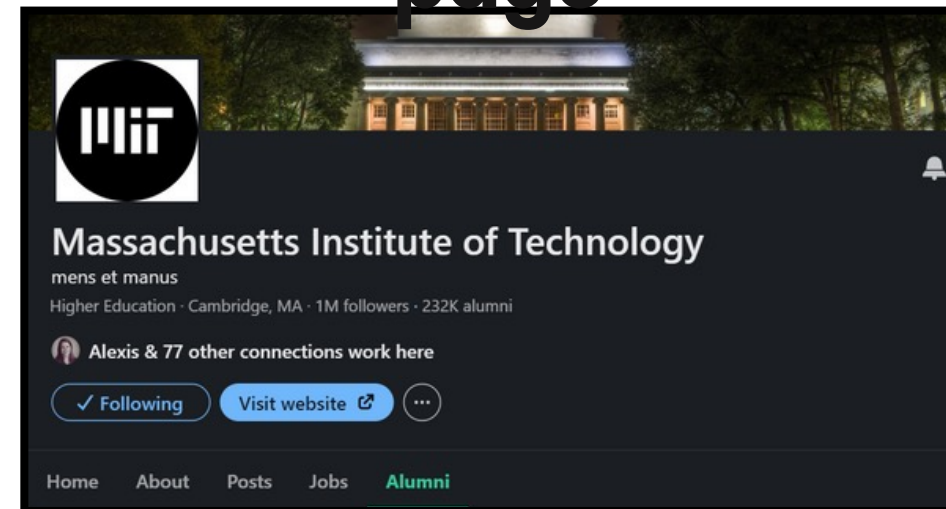
# Building your strategic network

## Alumni Advisors Hub



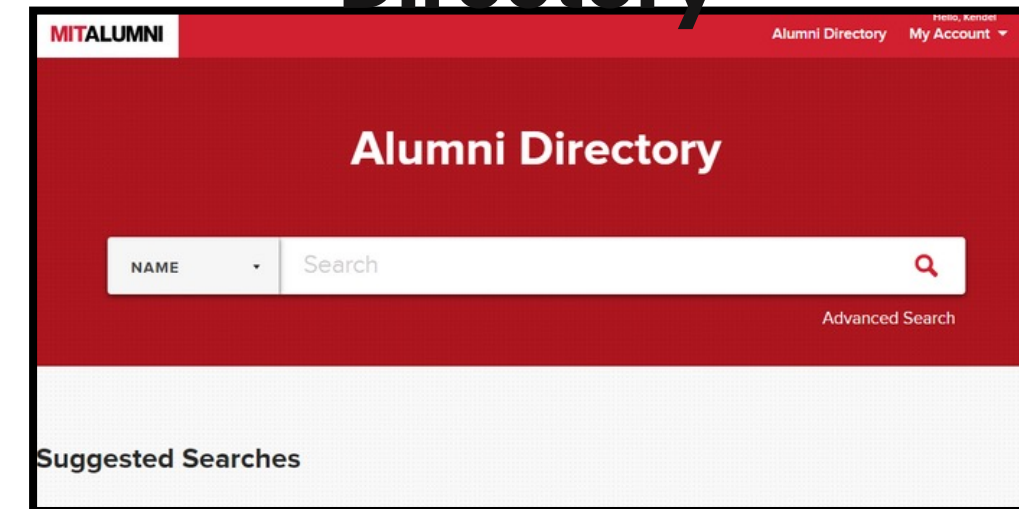
Book appointments with alumni who have volunteered to help students

## LinkedIn: MIT page



Use keywords to find alumni with relevant interests and experience

## Alumni Directory



Find contact info to connect with MIT alumni of interest

*INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING: Find interesting people with cool jobs, and ask them to tell you about more about it.*



# Informational Interviewing

## *Before & After*

### **Prepare**

- Consider your goals, what do you want/need to know?
- Research the company/position.
- Research the person with whom you are meeting.
- Generate a list of questions your research can't answer

### **Reflect**

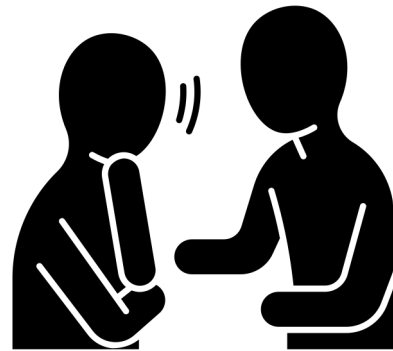
- What did you learn?
- What were your impressions of the job/field?
- Did you identify any other jobs/fields you might want to know more about?
- Did anything surprise you or become clear?
- Who can you speak to next?





# Informational Interviews – *Asking for A.I.R*

## Advice



How did you get into this field?

What do you wish you'd known before entering this field?

What classes would you recommend?

## Information



What are some trends you are seeing in your industry/field?

What are some challenges facing this industry?

What does your typical day look like?

## Referrals



What professional associations or groups do you recommend I connect with?

Is there anybody else you recommend I speak with?

What resources should I consider using to learn more?





# Informational Interviewing

## *Dos & Don'ts*

### **DO**

- Ask questions about their journey, not just their position or company.
- Offer to buy coffee (if in person); if Americans say 'no' it means no.
- Show your appreciation through thanks & active listening - send a thank-you note!

### **Do NOT**

- Ask for a job (just like you would never ask if a company sponsors work visas).





# How to be successful at networking

- Have a plan & set reasonable goals
- Practice your introduction & closing
- Bring a list of questions
- Be gracious in your request for further contacts; do not expect connections or introductions
- Follow-up with thanks & next steps





# Staying connected

- Send a note of congratulations to someone who recently changed positions or was promoted
- Repost a colleague's social media post\*
- Promote a recent publication (yours or someone else's)
- Ask a question
- Send an article
- Offer a quick life update
- Make an introduction between colleagues

*\*Consider the culture around social media in your field to figure out what forms of communication will work best for you*





# Interviewing

*What employers are looking for*

**Knowledge** | *Do you have a strong understanding of the role? Of the company?*

**Skills** | *Do you have the experience necessary to be successful in the role? Both technical and non-technical?*

**Attitude** | *Are you receptive to feedback? Do you work well with others? Will you grow in the role?*

**Personality** | *Will you get along with others on the team?*





# Interviewing conventions

Small talk

Match tone/formality to your audience

Show, don't just tell

2-3 min answers

Treat everybody with respect





# Types of interviews

- Informal conversation
  - career fair, networking event, conference, coffee chat
- Phone interview
- Technical/Case interview
- Behavioral Interview
  - if in person, might include a presentation or meal





# Visa status question

You never want your first question to a company to be if they sponsor work visas.

This is a question reserved for the hiring manager, who may bring up the question later.

\*\*\*This is the reason why informational interviewing is so important— you have already communicated your value in the field.





# Salary Negotiations

1. It is expected that you will negotiate
2. Usually happens with someone from HR when you get a job offer
3. You have the option to defer the conversation if it comes up earlier

*"Based on my understanding of your hiring practices, I feel confident we can find a number that works for both of us. But I'm eager to learn more about the company and the role first."*







# Salary Negotiations

## DO

- Be respectful & gracious
- Focus on the job, not the salary
- Research salary data ([here](#))
- Develop a flowchart/script
- Meet with CAPD for a mock salary negotiation
- Negotiate with HR (not future boss)

## AVOID

- setting a salary expectation
- talking about visa sponsorship (until later)





IN THE WORKPLACE

# On the job/in the workplace

## VALUES

01

Punctuality, deadlines, and time efficiency are paramount

02

Productivity over relationship building



**CAPD.mit.edu:**  
**New Jobs & Career Transitions**





# Expectations in the workplace

01

## Direct Communication

Say what you mean. No means no, and yes means yes. Deadlines are deadlines.

02

## Addressing colleagues

Addressing everyone by first names accepted, even the CEO and the higher-ups.

03

## Value of Time/Work Ethic

Employees expected to work hard to reach deadlines and if this is not possible, informing the boss soon of the reasons why this is not feasible (DIRECT COMMUNICATION IMPORTANT)

04

## Professional Attire/Personal Hygiene

Wear what is considered professional in this particular workplace. Americans have a sensitive nose, thus showering/brushing teeth/deodorant is a daily expectation in the US workplace.



# Expectations in the workplace

01

## Small Talk

Americans don't like silence and tend to fill it with small talk. Also a great way to get to know colleagues (What did you do this past weekend?)

02

## Company work cultures differ

Be aware of your surroundings and of social cues. Do colleagues take a lunch break or eat at their desks? Go out after work for drinks? Do workers actually take their vacations?

03

## Take Initiative / Ask for Feedback

Employers generally value when employees take initiative on a task or an idea (don't forget to share credit where credit is due, if you didn't do on your own!).

Your boss may not offer feedback, so feel free to ask.

04

## Building your collegial network

The way that many employees get ahead and get promoted in the US American workplace is through networking, not just working hard. You may consider joining activities during/after work, even if you feel uncomfortable.

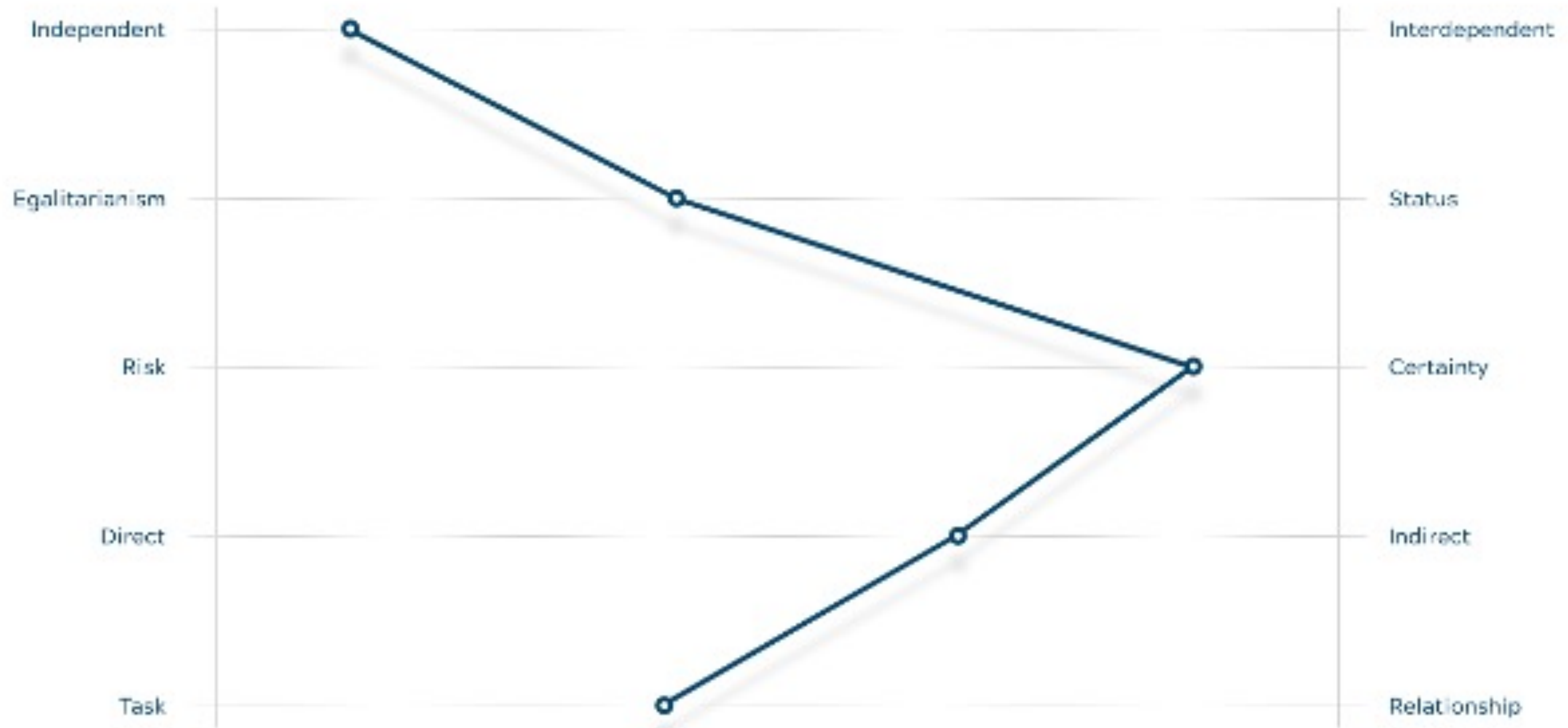


# GlobeSmart

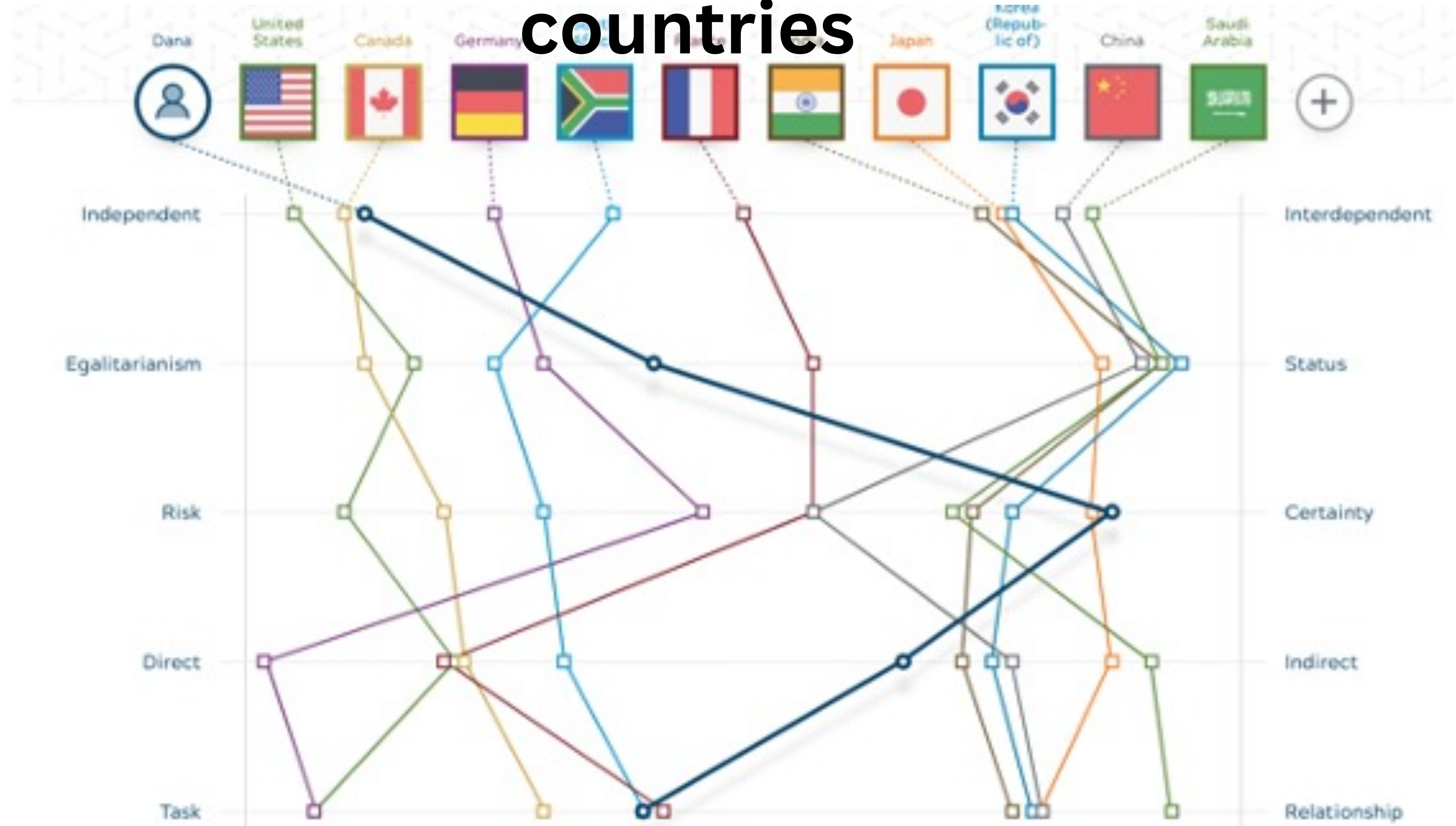
- [GlobeSmart](#) Online Resource—  
increase self-awareness
- FREE for the MIT community!  
Take the assessment and read the  
Culture Guides
- 5 different spectrums of  
characteristics examined:
  - Independent -  
Interdependent
  - Egalitarianism – Status
  - Risk – Certainty
  - Direct – Indirect
  - Task – Relationship



# Globesmart profile: Dana



# Compare profiles with other countries



# Thank You

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