1 In *The Culture Map* book, peach is supposed to represent cultures that are soft and friendly to other people that they just met. These cultures tend to, “…smile frequently at strangers, move quickly to first-name usage, share information about themselves, and ask personal questions of those they hardly know” (Meyer). These cultures do not equate friendliness to friendship. People from these cultures are often labeled as fake, arrogant, suspicious, or hypocritical by non-peach cultures. Many people from other cultures are taken back by this because they expect a deep connection to evolve but it usually doesn’t. In peach cultures, their approach to relationships is always kindness to strangers. They are much more willing to share information that would be considered private to coconut cultures. Peach cultures are also aware and fine with knowing that the relationship probably will not build with a stranger. In coconut cultures, “…people are more closed with those they don’t have friendships with. They rarely smile at strangers, ask casual acquaintances personal questions, or offer personal information to those they don’t know intimately” (Meyer). These kinds of people take a while to open up, but their relationships tend to last longer. Their approach to relationships is much more long term than peach cultures. People from the peach culture may see coconut culture people as cold or rude because they don’t share nearly as much personal information as they do. Since the US is such a diverse country, many people who are from both coconut and peach cultures mingle all the time. Personally, I think America is on the peach side because of my personal encounters. I have had plenty of strangers ask me about my family and my experiences without knowing me, and I usually ask the same or similar questions out of kindness and courtesy.

2. Meyers says that “One productive way to start putting trust deposits in the bank is to build on common interests” (Meyer). In her book, she mentioned that the Brazilians felt like they did not have aa sense of who the Americans were, so they did not know whether to trust them or not. This is similar to the movie Arrival; the humans were trying to figure out if the aliens that were on their planet were friends or enemies. By exchanging small words with them, they were able to build a familiar ground with the aliens and build off of it. That is why when the aliens spelled out weapon, Louise did not panic like the rest of the people. She had already established an understanding of the aliens and knew that she should not jump to negative conclusions about them. One example of employing this could be making sure to build a relationship with people. Since some cultures are like coconuts, it makes sense to try and get to know people so that you can build off of similar interests or mutual understanding.

3. When considering how to communicate with different people you should take their culture into consideration. Meyers says that if they are from a task-based society, then you can assume that the most efficient communication medium will probably be E-mail, telephone, face-to-face, etc. If you are going to be talking to someone who is from a relationship-based society, then it is wise to choose a communication medium that is as relationship-based as possible. Talking over the phone or meeting up with them in person would be better for these kinds of people. She says that “once you have built a good trusting relationship, you can move to a more task-based medium like e-mail” (Meyer). She says that it is important to make the extra effort for people of different cultures because it will help create a better business relationship in the end.

Sources:

Meyer, Erin. The Culture Map: Breaking through the Invisible Boundaries of Global Business. PublicAffairs, 2014.