



## GlobeSmart® Profile User Guide

### ❖ What is the GlobeSmart Profile, and how should I use it?

The GlobeSmart (GS) Profile is a cultural awareness tool. It helps individuals understand their own preferences and tendencies for interacting with others, and allows for comparisons with other individuals as well as with other cultures. The instrument places both individuals and cultures on a scale with 5 dimensions:

- Independent - Interdependent
- Egalitarianism - Status
- Risk - Certainty
- Direct - Indirect
- Task - Relationship

The GS Profile is not a diagnostic tool, but it is a useful way to begin discussions with your colleagues about the impact of culture on your preferred styles of engaging with others.

### ❖ How were the countries placed on the Profile?

The country placements on the dimensions are a combination of the three data sources below, each of which builds on the previous one:

1. **Merged data of leading cross-cultural researchers:** The country placements on the dimensions were originally derived from the merged data of leading cross-cultural researchers such as Hofstede, Schwartz, McCrae, and Inglehart. They were empirically derived, statistical averages of available country data on the five cultural dimensions as they existed in the research literature.
2. **GlobeSmart Profile User Data:** Since some of the original research used in deriving the country placements on the GS Profile dimensions is now a few decades old, the data from over 700,000 users of the instrument (as of early 2014) – each of whom filled out demographic items before completing the Profile – was also reviewed and combined with the earlier research data to update a number of the country placements in May of 2014.
3. **Expert Judgment Data:** Finally, expert opinions from a dozen Aperian Global trainers and associates living and working in countries around the world was incorporated in May of 2014 to make final adjustments to the country placements. There were three rounds of expert input in this revision process, with each round receiving higher levels of convergence on the placements of countries on the dimensions by the group of experts.

Note: It is important to note that these country placements on the dimensions are not absolutes. When viewing country comparisons on the Profile, a bell curve appears on the display chart. This is a reminder that while the country placements on each dimension are based on the data sets mentioned above, many people from a particular culture will fall to the left or to the right of the country average "plot" that is marked on the chart.



It is also useful to keep in mind that cultures do evolve over time, and typical behaviors along the selected dimensions of culture can change. Because of this, Aperian Global plans to continue to update the country placements in the GS Profile every few years.

#### ❖ **When was the most recent update to the GlobeSmart Profile?**

In January 2015, we analyzed the data from the 60,000+ users that have completed the GlobeSmart Profile since the new version was launched in May 2014. Based on this data, we updated the means and the standard deviations used to calculate the scores for each dimension. This did not change users' dimension scores from the survey, but it did shift the placement of some users' 'plots' slightly on some of the dimensions in the profile chart.

#### ***What does this mean for you?***

- If you have not yet taken the survey to generate a Profile, this change does not affect you. Please take the survey to create your Profile.
- If you already have a Profile, but took the survey before May 5, 2014, please retake the survey. As of May 5, 2014, the Profile consists of a new survey along with updated formulas for calculating placements on the dimensions. (See below for an explanation of the changes that were launched on May 5, 2014.)
- If you took the survey after May 5, 2014, you do not need to do anything. Your Profile will continue to display as it has since May 2014. We do, however, suggest you retake your Profile so you can benefit from the latest formula containing the new means and standard deviations. You may notice that the shape of your profile might shift a bit on some of the dimensions. For example, it may move closer to Risk on the Risk-Certainty dimension, and closer to Relationship on the Task-Relationship dimension.

A new and more robust version of the GS Profile was launched on May 5, 2014. [Click here](#) if you would like to view a brief webcast explaining the update.

The following components were examined and modified:

- a) Dimension definitions and survey items (what is being measured)
- b) Psychometric foundations (how well it measures what it claims to measure)
- c) Survey output (how the results are displayed on the Profile 'chart')
- d) Country placements along the dimensions (displayed on the Profile 'chart')

#### ***a) Dimension definitions and items***

Based on analysis of several hundred thousand users of the Profile, a number of the dimension definitions were modified to be clearer and, to the extent possible, to be mutually exclusive from each other. The five dimensions represented in the Profile are now defined as follows:

- **Independent/Interdependent** - How do I derive my identity?
- **Egalitarianism/Status** - What is my preference for how my group should be structured and how power should be distributed?
- **Risk/Certainty\*** - How do I make decisions in uncertain or ambiguous situations?
- **Direct/Indirect** - How do I communicate requests, tasks and feedback?



- **Task/Relationship** - When working on new projects, do I prefer to address tasks or relationships first?

\* "Certainty" was previously labeled "Restraint," but based on user feedback that the word was perceived negatively in a number of different languages and culture, it has now been changed to "Certainty"

### **b) Psychometric foundations**

To correspond with the new dimension definitions, the existing Profile survey items were revised and new ones were added. The new survey items were put through a series of clinical and formal pre-tests to assess their psychometric properties. The results of these pretests showed that, compared to the previous item set, the new items form dimensions that are (a) statistically more *independent* and *factorially sound* (items measure only the dimensions they were designed to measure), and are (b) more *reliable* (items consistently measure the desired behavior).

### **c) Survey Output**

In addition to clarifying the dimension definitions, modifying the survey items, and improving the psychometric capabilities of the Profile, the resulting graph that is displayed when a user takes the survey was also enhanced. The scale of the graph was increased from a 4 pt scale to a 9 pt scale. This allows for greater discrimination between individuals and countries than was possible with the previous graph.

This increased scaling of the graph, along with the new survey items and the revised calculations, produces a different profile 'shape' than was displayed in the previous version, but it has significantly higher accuracy in showing differences between profiles. This, in turn, increases the diagnostic value of the Profile.

### **d) Country placements**

The country placements on the dimensions were also updated as described in the second section above.

If you have questions about any of the changes, please contact your webtool marketing manager, or our support team at [webtools@aperianglobal.com](mailto:webtools@aperianglobal.com) for more information.

If you like, you can view a webcast on the [Psychometric Foundations of the GlobeSmart Profile](#). A detailed statistical analysis is available upon request at [webtools@aperianglobal.com](mailto:webtools@aperianglobal.com).

- ❖ **Is the GlobeSmart Profile a diagnostic tool that we should use to decide whether or not to send someone overseas?**

No. GlobeSmart includes a self-awareness component (the GlobeSmart Profile), however this is not meant to be used as a diagnostic tool to select candidates for assignments abroad. The GlobeSmart Profile is a tool for helping you increase your awareness of potential GlobeSmart Profiles between your personal style and the styles of your colleagues or customers in other countries. This raises the level of sensitivity to intercultural issues, and enables development of strategies for effectively bridging cultural GlobeSmart Profiles. *If you would like to learn more about the tools and services Aperian Global offers for international candidate assessment, please visit our website, <http://www.aperianglobal.com>.*

- ❖ **How does the GlobeSmart Profile promote diversity rather than homogeneity?**



The GlobeSmart Profile helps global organizations identify and leverage the diversity represented in their employees as well as their suppliers, vendors and customers worldwide. The GlobeSmart Profile places no particular value on where an individual user falls on each dimension's scale; various individual profiles can be functional within different business environments. However, GlobeSmart users often find it valuable to consider how their own profile is similar to or different from the profiles of their counterparts, as well as the average profiles of people from countries with which they need to do business.

❖ **Why does the GlobeSmart Profile use these five dimensions?**

The five dimensions used in the GlobeSmart Profile have a strong impact on behavior in the business context. These dimensions have been used extensively in research and have proven to be reliable indicators of behavioral trends. In addition, data sets are available on these dimensions, making it possible to compile profiles for many countries. As more GlobeSmart users complete their profiles, we continue to add to the body of research in the field. Please see descriptions of the dimensions below.

❖ **What does each of the dimensions mean? Do you have examples from the workplace?**

Independent

- Place great importance on individual identity
- Derive identity from personal choices and achievements
- Prefer taking action on one's own

Interdependent

- Place great importance on group harmony and cooperation
- Derive identity from group affiliation
- Feel a sense of duty, obligation, and loyalty to ascribed groups

Example: You are tasked with making a recommendation for process improvements in a departmental system. Will you put forth your own ideas, perhaps touching base with one or two others? Or will you try to touch base with everyone in your group to make sure that all views are reflected in the recommendation?

Egalitarian

- Be comfortable challenging the views of superiors
- Be relatively flexible regarding roles
- Treat everyone much the same
- Assume power and authority should be shared broadly among a group

Status

- Prefer not to challenge those above them
- Be deferential to superiors
- Adapt their behavior depending on relative status
- Assume power and authority should be reserved for a few members of a group



Example: You arrive for a meeting at a prospective customer. You are greeted by the president's assistant, and brought to his office. The number two person in the company starts the meeting, referring to his boss throughout on issues related to decisions, information shared, etc. Do you tend to talk to whomever you like, whomever you need to get the information you need without regard to title or status... Or are you likely to defer to status and rank, based on your belief that position and title have a key purpose and need to be respected?

#### Risk

- Prefer rapid decision-making and quick results
- Place great importance on flexibility and initiative
- Value speed over thoroughness

#### Certainty

- Spend significant time on background research
- Establish proper procedures before starting a project
- Value thoroughness over speed

Example: You're in a presentation. A manager from corporate is asking you to make a decision regarding your department's ability to commit to a specific production goal by the end of the month. Do you tend to make an approximate guess at the number of units you believe your department will produce, figuring it's better to shoot for a high goal, than to be too conservative. Or, do you ask for more information, require time to research many different factors, want some assurance of the qualifications of the individual or group asking the questions, need to consult other members of the group, etc.?

#### Direct

- Come to the point quickly
- Be forthright in asking questions in most settings
- Be comfortable making requests, giving direction, or disagreeing with others
- Give negative feedback directly

#### Indirect

- Spend time explaining the context before coming to the point
- Avoid asking questions in public settings
- Express disagreement in subtle ways
- Give negative feedback indirectly

Example: There have been some complaints about a colleague's work. Do you talk to the person immediately, and not worry too much about where you are having the conversation and who might be listening? Or are you more apt to go for a drink or lunch with the person, preferring a non-threatening, relaxed setting to feel out how things are going in general?

#### Task

- Place high value on reaching goals and objectives on schedule
- Prioritize accomplishing tasks over maintaining relationships
- Focus on what people achieve more than who they know



### Relationship

- View time building relationships as key to achieving good results
- Prioritize maintaining relationships over accomplishing tasks on time
- Focus on who people know as much as what they themselves can achieve

Example: You are meeting a prospective client for the first time over lunch in a restaurant. Do you bring handouts with you and begin discussing business as soon as introductions are over? Or do you spend a leisurely amount of time (possibly the duration of the entire meal) finding out about the other person's background and interests and waiting to talk business until another time?

#### ❖ **How is the GlobeSmart Profile different from the Myers Briggs (MBTI) or the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)?**

The primary benefit of the GlobeSmart Profile is that it is a quick and easy-to-understand awareness-building tool for people working across cultures. Both the IDI and the MBTI serve similar functions in different ways, but they are more involved (take more time) and require more interpretation to comprehend their results than does the GlobeSmart Profile. (The IDI requires that a Certified practitioner explains your results to you.) Both the IDI and the MBTI are well-researched and have been through a number of validation and reliability studies – as has the GlobeSmart Profile – but the GlobeSmart Profile is a more accessible tool.

The MBTI (Myers Briggs Type Indicator) is primarily an assessment of personality 'types,' and assesses how people with different 'types' can work effectively with each other. It is a very popular assessment, certainly in the U.S., and a number of Aperian Global clients use both the MBTI and the GlobeSmart Profile. The MBTI does not focus on cultural differences, and even though the GlobeSmart Profile could be seen in some ways as similar to the MBTI in that they both look at style 'preferences,' the GlobeSmart Profile generally looks at style preferences through the filter of culture, while the MBTI focuses primarily on Jungian psychological 'types.' See <http://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/>

The IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) focuses on developing intercultural competence, and it looks at a person's 'progression' along a series of intercultural adaptive stages from Denial to Acceptance and Adaptation. See <http://www.idiinventory.com/resources.php>. It's a well-known assessment in the intercultural field, but serves a different purpose from the GlobeSmart Profile. The GlobeSmart Profile does not look at where a person may be on a continuum of intercultural adaptability; rather it provides a snapshot of a user's current preferred styles or 'approaches' to interactions with others – e.g. you may have more of a Task-oriented approach to working with others vs. a Relationship-oriented approach – and allows the user to compare his/her profile on five 'dimensions' of culture with the average profiles of people from other cultures or individuals that the user invites to compare profiles.

#### ❖ **What am I sharing when I grant permission to view my profile?**

If you select the option that anyone within your organization can view your profile (or you accept an invitation from a colleague to share your GlobeSmart Profile), your colleagues will see your profile graph and be able to compare their profile to yours. They will not have access to your answers to the survey questions or any demographic information. Please see our [Privacy Policy](#) for more information.



❖ **How will the personal information I provide be used by GlobeSmart or my company?**

Your personal information will be kept confidential in the GlobeSmart application and will not be shared with anyone at your organization unless they have informed you otherwise. Your organization will receive reports containing aggregated usage information, but individual users will remain anonymous. GlobeSmart is certified with the TrustE and EU Safe Harbor seals.

Please see our [Privacy Policy](#) for more information.

❖ **Why is this survey different than the one used in the previous version of GlobeSmart?**

A number of the items in the survey are the same but a number have been changed. It is an updated survey that has a higher statistical validity than the previous survey.

❖ **How many people have taken the GlobeSmart Profile historically?**

Approximately 1,000,000 people have taken the GlobeSmart Profile since its initial launch in 2001. Since version 5.0 was launched in 2011, approximately 280,000 people have created GlobeSmart Profiles.

❖ **There's a bell curve on the chart behind my profile. What does this mean?**

The bell curve in the GlobeSmart Profile chart is symbolic, and meant to remind us that the country plots on the dimensions are averages of entire cultures. Not everyone from the selected country will fall exactly on the country placement on the dimension. Many will fall to the left and to the right. The length of the bell curve is not meant to be exact.

❖ **I created a team but would like to exclude myself from the comparison in order to take a screenshot. How can I do this?**

Create a comparison with the rest of your team. From the profile page, click "Print Profile." On the next screen, you will see the comparison, with a list of all names on the right side of the screen (your name will be at the top of the list). Click the checkbox next to your name that reads "Exclude Me." Clicking this box will recreate the comparison without your profile. You can then take a screenshot of the comparison. It is also possible to exclude your profile from comparisons with other individuals or locales if you wish to have a screenshot without your profile.

❖ **Why doesn't my colleague's name appear in my List of Colleagues?**

If your colleague has chosen the personal setting to "Automatically share my *GlobeSmart Profile* when an individual within my organization sends me an invitation. Note: Does not apply to team invitations," his/her email address will appear after typing in the first three letters of your colleague's name in the List of Colleagues. If your colleague has not chosen this option, you will not be able to locate him/her in the database, and you will need to enter the email address manually in the Selected Colleagues Invitation box.

❖ **What does "Demographics for My Organization" mean?**



Demographics for My Organization allow you to compare yourself to other members of your own organization based on selected demographics. You can compare yourself to other members of your organization based on Age, Gender, and any relevant custom demographics your organization has chosen to track. You will not see individual names, but you will see a number next to each option showing you how many people in your organization who have taken the GlobeSmart Profile fall into the particular categories you select.

❖ **Who's included in "Demographics for All Users"?**

Demographics for All Users include information from all GlobeSmart users across companies who have completed the GlobeSmart Profile survey. You can compare your profile to the profile of others based on two demographics: Job Type and Industry.

❖ **Why don't I see my demographic in "Demographics for My Organization"?**

In order for a demographic option to be available for comparison, at least three colleagues from your organization must fall into that category. If less than three colleagues fall into that category, you will not yet be able to view a comparison. Please check back soon!